

T. S.

REFLECTIONS  
UPON  
LEARNING,

Wherein is shewn the  
INSUFFICIENCY

Thereof, in its several Particulars.

In order to evince the

*Usefulness and Necessity*

OF  
REVELATION.

---

By a GENTLEMAN.

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# PREFACE.

**A** *Work of this nature, that  
would so hardly find a  
Patron, will stand the more  
in need of a Preface; Men that write  
in commendation of Learning, usual-  
ly seek out some great Genius to pre-  
fix to their Book, whom they make an  
Instance of all the Learning and Per-  
fections that are described in it; were  
I to chuse a Patron, consistently with  
my design, I must Compliment him  
with the weakness of his Parts and  
shortness of his Understanding, which  
is such a Compliment, as I presume  
I shall willingly be excus'd from.  
But then a Preface will be the more*

## PREFACE.

necessary to give an account of my undertaking, which is rather to enquire into the abuses, and to show the insufficiency of Humane Learning, than wholly to discredit its use. No Man ever did this, without disparaging his own Understanding, nor decry'd Learning but for want of it; it having been an old Observation, that will hold perpetually, That Knowledge has no Enemies except the Ignorant. An attempt of this nature would be utterly impracticable, for either it would be well perform'd, and then it must be done by reasons borrow'd from the Stores of Learning, by which means by reasoning against Learning, we must at the same time reason for it, and all our Arguments must return upon us; or if the performance were unlearned, it would be to no purpose, and might as well be let alone. This then is no part of my design.

All

## P R E F A C E.

*All that I intend, is, to take it down from its suppos'd heights, by exposing the vanity of it in several particulars, its Insufficiency in the rest, and I believe I might say, its difficulties, in all: And there is the more need of this in an Age, in which it seems to be too much magnified, and where Men are fond of Learning almost to the loss of Religion. Learning is our great Diana, nothing will pass with our Men of Wit and Sense, but what is agreeable with the nicest Reason, and every Man's Reason is his own Understanding: For if you examine them to the bottom, these mighty Pretenders have no truer grounds to go upon than other Men, only they affect a liberty of judging according to themselves, and (if they could be allow'd it) of making their own judgment a Standard of others. They plead for right Reason, but they mean their own, and talk of a rea-*

## PREFACE

*sonable Religion, whilst their own false Notions are mistaken for it, and while they seek the Goddess, they embrace a Cloud. In the mean time, they take us off from our surest Guide, Religion suffers by their Contentions about it, and we are in danger of runing into Natural Religion..*

*Where these things will end, God only knows, it is to be suspected, they may at last end in the thing we fear, and may bring us about to that Religion, for which of all others, we have the most abhorance: For after Men have try'd the force of natural Reason in matters of Religion, they will soon be sensible of its weakness, and after they have run themselves out of breath and can centre no where, they will be glad of any hold where they think they can find it, and rather than be always wandring, they will take up with an Infallible Guide. I am unwilling to enter-*

## P R E F A C E.

*tain such hard Thoughts of a Neighbouring Church, as to think they are sowing Discord among us to that purpose, but I much fear, we are doing their Work for them, and by our own Divisions, are making way for a Blind Faith, and Implicit Obedience; And may it never be said, That as Learning was one great Instrument under God, to bring about a Reformation, so the Abuse of it, by the Divine Permission, has brought us back to the same place from whence we came, and that our Enemies have done that by secret Engines, and Domestic Distractions, which by open Attempts they were never able to do. It is the sense of such Dangers and such Abuses that has drawn from me these Reflections, and has inclin'd me to harder Thoughts, and possibly, to say, harsher things of some parts of Learning, than will be agreeable to the Humor of the Age, and yet if any one who thinks thus of me, will*

## P R E F A C E.

*only suspend his Censure so long, till I draw my Conclusion, I am willing to hope, that the goodness of the End will atone for the hardest things, that shall be said in the Book.*

(a) Pic.  
Mirand.  
Exam.  
Van. Doct.  
Gent. Op.  
vol. 2.  
p. 467.

*I am sure I am not singular in this Design, one of the first Restorers of Letters, (a) A Man noted for his Piety as well as Parts, has writ a Book to this purpose, but it having been principally levell'd against Aristotle's Philosophy, which is now so much out of Credit, that it rather wants an Advocate to defend it, than a new Adversary to run it down, the Book it self is as much out of use, as the Philosophy is, that it designs to decry. He was follow'd in his De-*

(b) De  
Corrupt.  
Art. Op.  
vol. 1.  
p. 221.

*sign by Lodovicus Vives (b) in better Latin, and with greater Eloquence, but Vives's main Talent having been in Philology, and having been less conversant in Philosophical Matters, his Book is both very defective as to  
the*

J

## P R E F A C E.

the Particulars it treats of, and being suited to the Ancient Literature, is less agreeable to the Genius of our Age. What Cornelius Agrippa(c) (c) De van Scient. has writ upon this Subject is chiefly declamatory, and fitter for School-Boys, than of any just Moment or Consideration in a serious Enquiry. And a French Book (d) lately published upon the same Subject and with the same Title, tho' well and piously Writ, yet has nothing in it of what I expected, and is rather a Sermon, than a Treatise of Science. None of these Authors, nor any other I have yet met with, have come up full to my purpose, nor have I been able to borrow much help from them; where I have, I have quoted them, and if in any other things we happen to agree, without remembering them, it is a fault of Memory, and I make this acknowledgement once for all.

Sir

## P R E F A C E.

Sir W. Temple, and Mr. Wootton, have turn'd their Pens the other way, and have been so much taken up with describing the Beauties and Excellencies of Learning, as to have less occasion to discover its Faults; tho' it was scarce possible, whilst they cross'd one another's Opinion, either to commend Ancient Learning, without entring into the Defects of the Modern, or to prefer the Moderns, without censuring the Ancients; so that by consequence tho' not professedly, they have fall'n into this Controversy. I have, as far as possible, avoided saying anything that has been observ'd by them already, (tho perhaps this may be thought my fault, and I may thereby have said worse things of my own) and if in any other things I have contradicted them, I have done it in so tender a manner, as neither of them could blame, were they yet both Living. I have treated all Men with Decency  
and



## P R E F A C E.

and Respect, except Mons. Le Clerc, who has not deserv'd such Treatment. I have seen little of Monsieur Perault, and a considerable part both of his and Mr. Wootton's Books, come not within my Account of Learning; for I have nothing to say to Sculpture, Painting, Architecture, Gardening, Agriculture, &c. which I take to be more properly of Mechanical Consideration: But if Learned Men will needs include these likewise within the compass of Learning, it shall give me no disturbance: The Bounds of Learning are of late wonderfully enlarg'd, and for ought I know, Mr. H's Trade Papers may pass in time for a Volume of Learning.

Not that there is any need of swelling the Account, for Learning is already become so Voluminous, that it begins to sink under its own weight; Books crowd in daily and are heap'd upon Books, and by the Multitude of them,

## P R E F A C E.

them, both distract our Minds, and discourage our Endeavors. Those that have been writ upon Aristotle, are almost innumerable; In a very few Centuries, from Albertus Magnus, till a short time after Luther, there have been Twelve Thousand Authors, that have either Commented upon his Books, or follow'd him in his Opinions: This we have from good Authority, tho' the Author that reports and censures it, had surely forgot, that he himself has strengthen'd the Objection, by publishing a gross Volume, only to give an Account of Aristotle, his Writings, and Followers. (c) But however their Number may be in the Old Philosophy, I believe we may reckon by a modest Computation, that since that time to ours, we may have had double the Number of Authors in the New; which tho' some may look upon as an Argument of Learned Times; for my  
part

(c) V. Fr.  
Patric.  
Discus.  
Peripat.  
l. 10. p. 145  
Bas. Fol.

## P R E F A C E.

Part I have quite different Thoughts of Things, and must needs esteem it the great Mischief of the Age we live in, and cannot but think we should have more Learning, had we fewer Books.

I have notwithstanding adventur'd to throw in one to the Account, but it is a very small one, and writ with an honest design of lessening the Number : I propose neither Credit nor Advantage, (for I hope to take effectual care to be in the Dark) if I may do some little Service to Religion, and no Disservice to Learning, I have my End. I am inclin'd to hope, the Treatise may be of some use, as an Historical Account, in observing the Defects, and marking the Faults that are to be avoided by Beginners, and, possibly, it may afford some Hints to Wiser Men As it is, I offer it to the Public, if it proves useful, I shall have

## PREFACE.

*have much Satisfaction in my self,  
and if otherwise, I shall be very  
willing to be made a fresh Instance  
of that which I pretend to prove,  
The Weakness of Humane Un-  
derstanding.*

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CON-

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The

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*The Author being some distance from the  
Press, some Errata have happened, which  
the Reader is desired to correct as follow,  
viz.*

**P** 27. l. 13. r. Participles. p. 116. r. Carthaginian.  
l. 25. r. Apologists. p. 126. l. 28. r. knowing. p. 80.  
l. 19. r. in a Plenum. p. 82. l. 14. for this r. its. p. 84.  
l. 20. r. undervalue. p. 85. l. 16. Mathematical. Marg.  
r. Mr. G. p. 110. l. 1. r. remaining. p. 110. l. 17. after  
novel. r. that. l. 19. after those r. they have. p. 112. l. 22.  
r. time. p. 152. l. 28. r. antiquated p. 155. l. 6. ad rea-  
son. p. 156. l. 14. r. Antinomies. p. 160. l. 4. r. some  
other. p. 173. r. Vienne. p. 175. r. Canonists. p. 203. l. 6.  
r. marking. p. 84. l. penult. r. Voyage.

#### ADDENDA.

P. 83. According to Mr. W. I should have attributed  
Motion to the Earth.

P. 155. I would only be understood to mean, that the  
Digest and Institutes were finish'd in three years.

As to other mistakes, I must bespeak as much Candor from  
the Reader, as he can afford to one, that has been pretty free  
in censuring faults.

R E-

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# REFLECTIONS

UPON

## LEARNING, &c.

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### CHAP. I.

**S**ince I first begun to think, I have always had a mean opinion of two things, Humane Understanding, and Humane Will; The weakness of the latter is a confessed thing; we all of us feel it, and most men complain of it, but I have scarce yet met with any, that would own the weakness of his Understanding: And yet they both spring from the same corrupt Fountain; and the same cause, that has derived Contagion upon the Will, has spread Darknes upon the Under-  
B
standing

standing ; and however men may please themselves with an opinion of their own Wisdom, it is plain, the wisest Men know little, and they that are fullest of themselves and boast the highest, do usually see least, and are only wise for want of thinking.

We have had a mighty Controversie of late betwixt the Old and New Philosophers , and great inquiry has been made, whether the preference is to be given to the Ancient or Modern Learning ; For my part I will not venture to engage in so warm a Controversie, but 'tis some argument to me, that we have not over much of the thing, otherwise we should know better where to find it, and if I would say any thing I should be of opinion, that neither side has reason to boast. What the wisdom of the Ancients was, is not so easily known at this distance, by those Specimens of it that are left us, it does not appear to have had any thing in it very extraordinary, or which might not be attained to by their Posterity without standing upon their Shoulders ; Have not some dark and oracular expressions been esteemed enough to entitle a Man to the Reputation of Wisdom ?  
And



And was not any odd and sometimes extravagant opinion, if subtilly maintained, sufficient to set a Man at the Head of a Party, and make him the Author of a Sect of Philosophers?

The most Antient Philosophy was usually wrapt up and involv'd in Symbols and Numbers, which as far as they can be explained, do not contain any thing very mysterious, but it was the interest of these Great Men to keep a distance and be always in the Clouds, that they might be thought profound and procure a veneration by the obscurity of their Writings. They

*I suppose, he  
wished to be  
celebrated, and gave  
a satisfaction at  
court of things  
which he did not  
of the long, nature  
or morally.*

that have writ more plainly, have (at least some of them) been plain to an objection, and have said little more,

than what good Sense improv'd by observation and thought, would sug-

gest to most men without reading;

To say nothing here of the vast variety of opinions amongst them, which will fall in more properly in the thread of my Discourse; they did not agree in the first *Criteria* of Truth, which they have made as many and as different, as could possibly be thought of and carri'd their differences so far, that it put the *Scepticks* pretty early upon doubting of every thing, and at last

brought them to deny, that there was any such thing as Truth in the World.

The moderns have not yet gone so far, but they have made some advances, and seem by pretty easie consequences to be leading us towards it: For since *Aristotle's* Philosophy has been exploded in the Scholes, under whom we had more peace, and possibly, x almost as much Truth as we have had since, we have not been able to fix any where, but have been wavering from one opinion to another. The Platonic Philosophy was first introduced with the Greek Learning, and wonderfully obtain'd for some time, among the men of polite Letters; but however Divine it might seem at first, and for that reason was tain'd more favourably, it was and upon a short tryal to lead to Heresie, and so went of again under a Cloud. The moderns were now wise enough to set up for themselves, and were more pleas'd with their own inventions, than with the dry Systems of the Old Philosophers. Several attempts were made unsuccessfully, nor had they set out long or done much, till they had run themselves into such a maze, That

M.

M. Des Cartes thought it necessary to sit down and doubt, whether they were not all out of the way: His doubts increased upon him by doubting, and he must have continu'd under them, had he not by a strange turn of thought, struck evidence out of uncertainty; for he found such strength and conviction in doubting, that he brings an Argument from it to prove a first Truth, The reality of his own Existence: He likewise borrowed great lights from *Ideas*, which have been since improv'd, by comparing their agreement and disagreement with one another, and with the Reality of things; and since that conformity has not been evident enough, we have been consulting the *Divine* ~~World~~ *World*, to fetch thence more ~~perfect~~ *Ideas*, and are at last come to see all things in God; A way, which could it be as easily made out, as it is asserted, I do not see, what we could desire further, for we shall hardly see more clearly in a state of Glory: But all these particulars we shall meet with, as we go along.

What has been said of Philosophy, is true in other sorts of Learning and however we may be puff'd up with

vain conceits, and may flatter ourselves with discoveries of *New Worlds* of Learning, and fancy there is little hid from the profound Search and accurate Enquiries of so learned an Age, to me it seems we are yet much in the dark, x that many of our discoveries are purely imaginary, and that the State of Learning is so far from perfection, much more from being the Subject of Ostentation, That it ought to teach us modesty and keep us humble. To this end, I propose to trace it in its several Branches; and were the management of my Argument answerable to the truth of it, I should not doubt of giving satisfaction to impartial Readers.

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C H A P. II.

Of Languages.

**L**anguages being the Channels by which most of our Learning is convey'd, it is necessary to the attaining of Knowledge, that these should be kept clear and open; if the Streams in these run muddy, or are corrupted, all the knowledge that is conveyed by them, must be obscure: words at the best are no very certain signs of things, they are lyable to ambiguity, and under that ambiguity are often subject to very different meanings; and tho this as far as it is the common condition of Speech must be submitted to, and is no objection in plain Laws and easie Precepts, that are intelligible enough in any Language, yet in matters of Science, it is much otherwise; these are nice things; the strict meaning is to be observ'd in them; nor can we mistake a word without losing the Notion.

The first Language, the *Hebrew*, was very plain and simple, (a good Argu-

*therefore we cannot mistake of the certain meaning of words. I have seen from all ambiguity. I have confidence in this!*

ment of its being an Original ) consisting of few Roots, and those very simple and uncompounded; it seems fitted for the purposes, for which it was design'd, which was not so much to improve Men's knowledge, as to better their lives, and this end it did perfectly answer: Indeed the Ancient Tongues are generally the most uncompounded and consequently more plain and easie; but then whilst things continue thus, as Languages were easie, so they were defective, and therefore as from necessity Men were put upon improving Speech; so particularly as Arts increased, Languages grew up with them, and Men were put upon coining new words to express the new Ideas they had of things. This has enlarg'd the Bounds of Language, and swoln it to such a height, that its Redundancy is now a greater Inconvenience, than the defectiveness of it was before.

The inconveniences from Languages are chiefly two, First, Their variety, and Secondly, their mutability. 1. Were there only one Language in the World, Learning would be a much easier thing, than it now is; Men might then immediately apply  
to

to things, whereas now a great part of our time is spent in words, and that with so little advantage, that we often blunt the edge of our understanding, by dealing with such rough and unpleasant tools: For however apt Men may be to over-value the Tongues, and to think they have made a considerable progress in Learning, when they have once overcome these, yet in reality there is no internal worth in them, and Men may understand a thousand Languages without being the wiser, unless they attend to the things, that they deliver: It is in order to this that they are to be learnt, and it is the hard condition of Learning, that in this respect, it cannot be without them; This labour must necessarily be devour'd in our way to Knowledge, and every Man must dig in this Mine, that hopes to be Master of the Treasure, it conceals; much dross is to be separated, and many difficulties to be overcome.

When I speak of the variety of Languages, I do not mean that all of them are necessary, at least not to all sorts of Learning, were this our case, we could have few compleat Scholars; but tho all of them be not neces-

necessary, yet some of them are allowed to be so, particularly such as are styl'd, Learned; and there is such a connexion among most Tongues of the same kind, that it is hard to excell in any one, without some tolerable skill in the rest. This is pretty plain in the Greek and Latin, and the reason is clear in the Eastern Tongues, where the affinity is greater. Two of the Languages that in their different kinds pretend to most Learning, (I do not here inquire, how truly) are the *Arabic* and *Greek*, and it happens not well, that these two are the most copious and difficult. They that have skill

(a) *W. Walt.*  
*Proleg.* 14.  
§. 6.

(a) in the first assure us, that it abounds in Synonymous Words, that it has five hundred words for a Lyon, and almost a thousand for a Sword, which are enough to make an intire Language, and almost as many as all the *Radicals* in the *Hebrew* Tongue. And as for the *Greek*, which is uncontestedly Learned, most know, how copious it is, for tho its *Radicals* are not so many as might be imagin'd, which some have computed not much to exceed three thousand, (b) yet this is abundantly made up in its Compositions, and however simple it may be in

(b) *Wilk.*  
*R. Ch. cap.*  
*ult.*



in its *Roots*, it spreads very widely in its Branches: If we add to this, its many different dialects, and all the various Inflections of Nouns and Verbs, which diversify words, and distinguish them from themselves, this will swell the account much higher, and make it almost an Infinite thing. So that what from the variety of Languages, and the *Copia* of those that are reputed Learned, one great obstruction lies in the way of Learning.

*ch. may be easily  
by harmonizing by  
industry.*

The other inconvenience is from their mutability, for whatever their number may be, yet were their nature fix'd and their condition stated, the measures that are taken from them might be more steady; but when to the multitude of them, we add their mutability, we are still under greater difficulties. Words like other things are subject to the common Fate of vicissitude and change; they are always in Flux, ebbing and flowing, and have scarce any fixed period; for being govern'd by Custom, which it self depends upon one of the most unconstant things in the World, the humour of the People, it is scarce possible it should be otherwise: no Prince ever gave Laws to these, *Cesar* who gave Laws

Laws to *Rome*, could give none to its Language, and it was lookt upon as the height of flattery in that Sycophant, that offer'd to Complement him with such an extravagant Power; in this Custom is only absolute. We can scarce have a better instance of this, than in the Tongue we are now speaking of, the Latin; that Language that was spoke soon after the Foundation of *Rome*, was perfectly unintelligible in the Age of *Augustus*; nay, some hundred years after that period, and not 150, before *Cicero's* time, the Tongue that was then vulgar, can hardly now be understood without a Comment. This is evident from the Inscription on the *Columna Rostrata*, that is yet in being, and a Copy of which has been given us by Bishop Walton (c). In *Cicero's* Age, that Tongue was in its full height, it had been growing up till then, ever after it was declining, and had only one short Stage of Perfection. They that came after were observ'd to write with some mixture, even *Livy* had his *Patavinity*, which is most probably understood of a tincture from his Country Education.

Did not join us  
own Language  
but what then?

Augustus  
Walton (c)  
Proleg.  
p. 5.

Successively on, they were more corrupt, *Paterculus*, *Seneca*, &c. still writ with a greater mixture, till at last either by mixing with foreign Nations, in sending Colonies, or by the breaking in of Barbarous People upon them, the Language sunk into decay and became utterly Barbarous.

The Greek Tongue had the same Fortune with the Latine, tho it continu'd vulgar longer; for as *Greece* did assist the *Romans* in giving perfection to their Speech, (they having not begun to cultivate Arts or polish their Language, till they had subdued *Greece*) so they receiv'd a great tincture and corruption from their Conquerors, either first, when they became an accession to their Empire, as appears from those that writ in that Tongue after the reduction of *Greece*; or after, when the Empire was translated to *Constantinople*, and that City became new *Rome*, and the Seat of Empire. From that time, the Greek sunk apace, as must needs be expected, where the Latin was the Court Language, and made use of in their Laws and Courts of Judicature, and the Greek in a manner confin'd

to the vulgar. In *Justinian's* time, who was not very long after *Constantine*, it is plain, it was much corrupted, as is evident, from the *Acts* of the *Councils* of these times, and the Acclamations of the People and Clergy on such occasions, Instances whereof are given by *Du Fresne*, in his Learned Preface to his *Greek Glossary* (a). As we descend lower the corruption is greater, as is shown by the same Learned Person: The reduction of *Constantinople* by the *Frank's* was one other great blow, the last and fatal stroke was given by that Deluge of Barbarism, in the Inundation of the *Turks*, who bore down all before them. What the condition of it now is, may be seen in *Crusius*, (e) whence will appear not only the present corrupt State of that Tongue, but also the Reasons from which it proceeds, either from the mixture of the Latin, the *Turco-Arabic*, and other foreign Tongues; or by dividing words that should be conjoyn'd, or runing two words into one that should be divided, or by other faults in *Orthography*, that is now in great neglect among them. And what is most melancholy in the account, is, That even at *Athens*, that

(e) *Turco-*  
*graec. p. 99.*  
*224, &c.*

that was once Renoun'd for Learning and Eloquence, their Tongue is now more corrupt and barbarous, than in any other part of *Greece*; to that degree, as is there taken notice of, that it would draw tears from any one to observe (f) the miserable change. (f) 16. r. In all parts of *Greece*, their Speech is <sup>99</sup> so far degenerated from its ancient purity, that as a Learned Greek cannot thoroughly understand the modern vulgar Tongue, much less is the Ancient Greek understood by the moderns.

Now under this great multiplicity, as well as change, what difficulties are we to struggle with, and what uncertainties are to be overcome? Our words are so many and so uncertain, that there is both great difficulty in becoming Masters of them, and after that in fixing and determining their Sense: We are to trace them up to their first Originals, and afterwards to pursue them down to their last Decay, to mark their several times and periods, in all which they much vary, and are often capable of different meanings, or their true meaning is very obscure. There is only one way of coming at their meaning, after they become dead Languages and cease to be

be vulgar, by the Books that have been writ in them; but besides the want we are in of some of these, and defects in those we have, tho they might serve well enough for common ends

*These are not all  
and uses, yet the things we are now  
enquiring after, are matters of Science,  
which are abstruse things, and not so  
easy to be express'd in such proper terms,  
as are not liable to be mis-understood:*

Such particularly are Terms of Art, that must needs be obscure, as being too comprehensive, and taking in more notions than one under the same Word; which tho of good use, as being designed to make knowledge more compendious, yet have frequently turn'd the other way, by requiring large Comments, that have been often writ upon a single word, and perhaps after all have left it more doubtful than it was before.

Dictionaries indeed have been called in to our assistance, which have been compil'd with much pains and in great plenty, not only for words, but for Sciences and Arts, but besides the no great agreement that is among them, they are swoln to such a height, and become so numerous, that those very Books that were design'd as helps,  
now

now breed confusion, and their Bulk and number is become a Burthen. Such alone as have been compos'd for the French Tongue (which as yet is no learned Language, tho' it bids pretty fair for it) would fill a Library, and only one of those, and that not the largest, has been the work of forty Years, tho' it was carri'd on by the united labours of the French Academy; after all which care, it has not escap'd censure, but has been thought to want Correction; and does thereby show, how impossible it is to set Bounds or give a Standard to Language, for which purpose it was design'd. Not only every Tongue, but every Faculty has met with this help, Dictionaries are become a great part of Learning, and nothing remains, but that as it has fair'd with *Bibliothèques*, which are grown so numerous, that (g) a *Bibliotheca Bibliothecarum* was thought a necessary work, so Dictionaries should have the like service done them; a *Dictionaryum Dictionariorum*, might be a work of some use, I am sure of great Bulk, and I wonder it has not been yet undertaken.

(g) V. Ant.  
Lasser. v.  
Ph. Lab.

To redress and heal all these inconveniencies, an universal Remedy has indeed been thought of, a *Real Character* and

C

Philo-

*Philosophical Language*, a work that has been pursu'd of late with great application, and with some expectations of success and advantage; But however plausible this may seem at a distance, it is to be fear'd, it is only so in Theory, and that upon tryal, it will be found an impracticable thing. For this Language being design'd not to express words but things, we must first be agreed about the nature of things, before we can fix Marks and Characters to represent them, and I very much despair of such an agreement. To name only one, when Bishop Wilkins first undertook this design, (h) *Substance* and *Accidents* were a receiv'd Division, and accordingly in ranking things, and reducing them to Heads, (which is the great excellency of this Design) He proceeds according to the order they stand in, of *Substance* and *Accidents*, in the *Scale of Predicaments*; but were he to begin now, and would suit his design to the Philosophy in vogue, he must draw a new Scheme, and instead of *Accidents* must take in *Modes*, which are very different from *Accidents* both in Nature and Number. Bishop Wilkins was an extraordinary Person, but very projecting, and I doubt this design may go along with his

But it yet may  
kind sufficiently  
agreed upon till  
nature of things is  
agreed upon which  
is common to all  
on other things  
one is not the same

(h) Real.  
Char. Par.  
2. c. 1.

See for table  
things in nature  
all sorts of things  
conceivable.

Ar. V. censure. He  
proceeds in a  
manner which  
is not usual

That it is not for us to understand either the excellency of the design, or of the performance.



his *Dadalus* and *Archimedes*, and be ranked with his *flying Chariot* and *voyage to the Moon*. The Divisions of Tongues was inflicted by God as a Curse upon humane Ambition, and may have been continu'd since for the same reason; and as no Remedy has been yet found, so it is most probable, it is not to be expected, nor are we to hope to unite that which God has dividet. The Providence of God may have so order'd it for a check to Men's Pride, who are otherwise apt to be building *Babels*, were there no difficulties to obstruct and exercise them in their way.

*and for office  
and curse  
and punishment*

## C H A P. III.

## Of Grammar.

**T**HO Grammar belook'd upon by many as a trivial thing, and only the Employment of our Youth, yet the Greatest Men have not thought it beneath their care; *Plato* and *Aristotle* among the Greeks, and *Cesar* and *Varro* among the Latins have treated on this Subject. In our times the Common Grammar that goes under the name of *Mr. Lily* was done by some of the most considerable Men of the Age; The English Rudiments by *Dr. Cost* Dean of *Pauls*, with a Preface to the first Editions, directing its use, by no less Man than *Cardinal Wolfey*; The most Rational part, the Syntax, was writ or corrected (1) by *Erasmus*, and the other parts by other hands: So that tho *Mr. Lily* now bears the name, which while living, he always modestly refus'd, yet it was carri'd on by the joynt endeavours of se-

(1) *Op. Tom.*  
1. p. 141.

veral Learned Men, and he perhaps had not the largest share in that work.

Were there more of *Cæsar* and *Varro* extant, they might be of good use to us in our Enquiries, but all *Cæsar's* Book on this Subject being lost, and only some parts of *Varro* left, we want two good Helps: Tho from those short Specimens we have of *Cæsar*, we were not to expect too much from him; he has been quoted by (k) *A. Gellius* with doubtful Characters, and twice or thrice (l) by *Charisius* an Antient Grammarian, and always to correct him, as he will seem to deserve to any one who will take the pains to consult the particular places: And as for *Varro*, his Books are chiefly about the Etymologies of words, which are of no great use, being obscure and uncertain.

*quite otherwise*

(k) L. 19.

(l) L. 1.

p. 69. 214.

Ed. Patch.

*many of them  
very obscure and  
little use  
great light to the  
understanding  
the growth and  
reason of the La-  
tin tongue.*

The following Grammarians are yet more defective, we have a large Collection of them put out by *Putschius*, who (against the custom of most Editors, that seldom use to speak disparagingly of their Authors) ingenuously confesseth, that some of them were scarce worth an Edition. And most of them having been writ, either when Learning was low, or after Barbarism had begun to overflow the Empire, it is no wonder, that

## Reflections upon Learning.

they do not rise above their Level, or that while they lay down Rules in this Art, they scarce write in tolerable Latin: *Priscian* himself will be no exception to this, who notwithstanding his strictness in giving Rules and severity in censuring others, has much ado to preserve himself from Barbarism: Let any one read some of his first lines, he will need go no farther to make a judgment.

Some of our Modern Criticks have deserv'd well of this Art, who as they have us'd more perspicuity, so they have writ with much greater Purity, than most of the Antient Grammarians have done: *Valla*, *Erasmus*, and our *Lynceus* have taken much pains and shown great judgment in this matter; and yet after all, as if nothing had been done, anleth *Sanctius*, and after him *Schioppius*, and correct all that had gone before them. *Cicero* and *Quintilian* were blind with these Men; who make such discoveries, as never had been thought of, by any of the Antients; all Grammar before them was, *Joacims*, polluted and full of mistakes; theirs only is the true way, which they pretend is highly Rational, containing few and easie Rules, and under these scarce any exceptions. Tho

it

if this new method be examin'd, it will be found as fallacious, and they as fallible as other Men: *Sanctius's* great principle on which he goes, is, That Languages, and particularly the Latin, are not purely arbitrary, or depending barely on use and custom, but that an Analogy has been observ'd, and a reason may be given of the Idioms of Tongues, and upon this he builds a Rational Grammar. This perhaps might hold in some measure, in the Hebrew, as far as its words were impos'd upon just Reasons; but in the Latin Tongue which he treats of, that was first form'd and afterwards grew up in confusion, and under a People, while they were yet Barbarous, we are not to expect such mighty Regularity. The *Romans* knew nothing of Grammar, till the times of *Ennius*, when that Tongue was pretty well grown, and consequently could have no great regard to it in forming their Language, and therefore for any one now, to pretend to fix the Analogy of words, or to reduce all under strict Rule, is to set bounds where they were never intended, and to find a Reason that was never meant. Had Grammar been as antient as Languages, we might have proceeded in this manner, but it being

*It is de lex-  
spect if orma  
gine it.*

being invented only as a help, and not fram'd originally as an Immutable Rule, we must suit it to our business as well as we can, but are not to expect, it should be uniform and not lyable to many exceptions.

To take a short view of some particulars, 1. As to Letters, we are not yet agreed about their Original, which might be of use in fixing our Alphabets, for tho the Greek letters and from them the Latin, seem deriv'd from the *Phenician*, and these again from the ancient *Hebrew*, as has been attempted to be shown, not only from History, but from the affinity of letters, by turning the *Hebrew* Characters towards the Right hand, according to our way of reading; yet there lies one great objection against this, That *Cadmus* who brought the *Phenician* letters among the *Greeks*, is only said to have brought sixteen, and therefore must have left some behind him, for the *Phenician* or *Hebrew* Alphabet was always fixt, and of the same length as now, since we have had any writing, a standing Evidence of which we have in several Alphabetical Psalms and Chapters. Were this more certain, it would help to determine our Alphabets, both as to their Numbers and Powers, where

now we are uncertain in both, and there are great disputes among the Criticks, as to some of the Elements, whether they be letters or no.

(1) In the Etymological or Analogical part, we labour under the same difficulties; nor can it be otherwise, where languages were so much the effect of chance, and were not fram'd by any settled or establish'd Rules. When *Varro* writ his Book, *De Lingua Latina*, it is plain this Analogy was a disputable thing, he brings several objections against, as well as reasons for it, and his Instances are so many, and his objections so considerable, that he must needs be allowed to have left it doubtful. In the same Age, when a question was put by *Pompey* to most of the Learned Men in Rome, <sup>(m) V. A. Gell. l. 10. cap. 1.</sup> concerning the Analogy of a very common word, they could come to no resolution about it, tho' *Cicero* was one of the number, and so it was left undetermin'd. And if the thing were so much controverted among them, who had better opportunities of enquiry, as living nearer the Original, when many monuments of Antiquity were left, and the Latin yet a living Language, among them; it must needs be much more so to

to us, who live at this distance, and want many of their helps: Our greatest light must be borrowed from their Books, and we can be only more happy in the application. Accordingly we follow them pretty close, and are much more directed by the custom of Ancient and approved Authors, than by the reason of words that is perpetually varying. How many words are there agreeable enough with Analogy, and of Modern use among learned Men, which yet, because they are not us'd by the Ancients, are not only dislik'd, but are look'd upon by the Critics, as *vitia Sermonis*? Innumerable Instances may be had (n) in *Vossius*: few men would be afraid to use, *Incertitudo*, *Ingratitudo*, and other words of the like nature; there is nothing disagreeable in them or disproportionate to Speech; and yet because they have not been us'd by the best Classic Authors, but have been seemingly avoided, when they came in their way, and either paraphras'd, or Greek words put in their room, they have been exploded by our Modern Critics. The *Anomalisms* in words have been so many, and the differences yet more among those that have treated of them, that some have gone so far as to deny the

(n) *De*  
*vit. Ser-*  
*mon. Spar-*  
*sim.*



the thing it self, and to allow no Analogy either in the Greek or Latin Tongue.

(3.) Grammar has fared no better in the constructive part, whether we will be guided by Rules, or authority of Best Authors; the number of Rules is become a Burthen, and the multitude of exceptions is yet more vexatious: If we will believe *Schioppius*, there are five hundred Rules in our Common Grammars, in the Syntax only of Nouns and Verbs and Principles, and scarce any of those without their exceptions, and so proportionably in the other parts of Syntax; all which must employ a great part of our time. Or if we will be directed by authorities, the Critics have been so unmercifully severe, that we scarce know, which to follow: *Cicero* tho the most unexceptionable has not escap'd their censure, he has been pelted by them, and *Valla* and *Erasmus* have charg'd him with Solacisms. *Ditius Commorans Athens* — erat animus ad te scribere; and *Quum in animo haberem navigandi*,<sup>(o)</sup> are noted passages to this purpose. And indeed tho *Cicero* be look'd upon as a Standard of Language with us, yet he was not so to those of his own Age

(o) *Vi*  
*Erasm. Cicero. Dial.*  
*Op. Tom. 1.*  
*p. 823.*  
*Valla. l. 1.*  
*A: Cap. 1.*

(p) L. 7.  
Ep. 3.

*Atticus* (p) in an Epistle to him, chargeth him with false Latin, and being put to a vindication, he defends himself by the authority of *Terence*; so that whatever *Cicero* be to us, *Terence* was then the better Authority. Neither of them sure are unexceptionable, nor any other that we can meet with, tho we should carry our search through the whole Set.

4. Pronuntiati<sup>on</sup> has been the Subject of great Debates, especially in the Greek Tongue, the pronuntiati<sup>on</sup> of which has been more neglected: And tho at first view, it may seem a light thing, and hardly worth a Debate, yet the neglect of it, has been of very ill consequence to that Tongue. For while the Modern Greeks had little regard to the powers of their Letters, and mix'd and confounded the sounds of their Vowels and Diphthongs, and run most of them into one, in their pronuntiati<sup>on</sup>, they came at last in many words, to write as they spoke, which was one great occasion of the corruption of their Tongue. This vicious way of speaking was brought by the exil'd Greeks into *Italy*, and from thence together with Learning, spread over the greatest part of *Europe*, till it met

met with a check here in *England*, from two very Eminent Men, both of them successively Professors in the *University of Cambridge*, Sir *Thomas Smith*, and Sir *John Cheek*. And because the Controversie is not much known, and may afford some light to the pronunciation of the Greek, I will give a brief account of this Grammatical War.

It was in the latter end of *Hen. 8's* Reign, that *Smith* and *Cheek* began to observe the inconveniences in this sort of pronunciation; they saw that not only the beauty of the Language was lost in this way, but likewise its very Spirit and Life were gone, by the loss of so many Vowels and Diphthongs, and the Language become *jejune* and languid: In this way of speaking it, nothing of numerosity appear'd in the Antient Orators and Rhetoricians, nor those flowing Periods, for which they had been renown'd in Old *Greece*; neither could they themselves show their Eloquence, in their Orations or Lectures, for want of the beauty and variety of sounds. This put them upon thinking of a Reformation, (q) and having consulted most of the Antient Rhetoricians, and other Greek Authors, who had treated of Sounds and finding sufficient grounds from thence for

(q) *W. Cheek.*  
*De ling.*

*Gr. pronunt. Di-*  
*put. cum*  
*Sept.*

*min. sparf.*  
*v. Smith*  
*De pronunt. Ling.*  
*Gr.*

for an alteration, with the consent of most of the learned Linguists in the University, they set about the work, with some little opposition at first, but afterwards with success, and almost general approbation. *Cromwel* was then Chancellor of the University, under whom Reformatiōs were not so dangerous, but *Gardiner* succeeding, who disliked all Innovations, a stop was put for some time; This Man assum'd a power, that *Cesar* never exercis'd, of giving Law to Words, and having writ to *Cheek* then Greek Professor to desist from this new method, which in reality was the Ancient and true way, and not meeting with a suitable compliance, he sends out an order in his own name and the Senate's, which being too long to insert at large, I shall only mention two or three Heads of it as being somewhat extraordinary.

*Quisquis nostram potestatem agnoscis,  
sonos literis sive Græcis sive Latinis ab usu  
publico presentis seculi alienos, privato ju-  
dicio assingere ne audeto.*

*Diphthongos Græcas nedum Latinas, ni-  
si id diæresis exigat, sonis ne diducite—*

*'Ai ab e, & ei, ad i, sono ne distinguito,  
tantum in Orthographia discrimen servato  
u, i, v, uno eodemque sono exprimito —*

*Ne multa. In sonis omnino ne philosophator,  
sed utitor presentibus —*

After such a publick Declaration, there was no farther room for private judgment, an obedience was paid, and *Gardiner's* way prevail'd, till a Reformation in Religion, made way for a Reformation in Language, that has obtain'd ever since. However, the Controversie was then manag'd with much warmth and Learning, *Gardiner* insisted principally upon Custom, and the Authority of the present *Greeks*: on the other side they pleaded Antiquity, and that drawn down from the most ancient Authors; several of the Greek Rhetoricians were brought into the Controversie, and other Authors that had dropt any expression that look'd that way, and a Man would wonder to see so much learning shewn on so dry a Subject. Where the victory lay is pritty visible, and so great a Man (*r*) as *Du Fresne* could not have been at a loss, how to determine the matter, had he not been possessed with partiality for a Party, which he shows

(*r*) *Gloss.  
Gr. Præf.  
9, 12.*

shows too plainly, by blaming *Bishop Godwin* (though very unjustly) for leaving *Gardiner* out of his Catalogue of Bishops.

(1) R. Char.  
I. i. Ch.  
4. &c.

But I have run out too far in Grammatical niceties, whoever desires more on this Subject, may meet with enough in *Bishop Wilkins* (f) and I have principally insisted on such particulars as have been neglected or overlooked by him.

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CHAP. IV.

*Of Rhetoric and Eloquence.*

AS Grammar teacheth us to speak properly, so it is the part of Rhetoric to instruct, how to do it elegantly, by adding Beauty to that Language, that before was nakedly and Grammatically true. If we would be nice in distinguishing, there is a difference betwixt Rhetoric and Eloquence, tho we treat of them under the same Head; the one lays down Rules, the other practises them, and a Man may be a very good Rhetorician, and yet at the same time a mean Orator: Perhaps *Quintilian* gives as good Rules as *Cicero*, I am sure in better method, and with greater closeness; whereas the other is so much an Orator, that he cannot forget it, whilst he acts the part of a Rhetorician, he dilates and flourishes, and gives example instead of Rule: And yet a Man that would form a Comparison betwixt

D

*Qui*

\* *Quintilian's* Declamations, (if yet they  
 \* be *Quintilian's*) and the Orations of *Tul-*  
 \* *ly*, would be in great danger of forfeiting  
 his discretion.

The Ancient *Romans* had Orators a-  
 mong them and some Eloquence, In-  
 stances whereof we have in their Hi-  
 story almost as high as the *Tarquins* ;  
 but it was then a chaste thing without  
 Paint or Dress, Rhetorick was not yet  
 known among them, the name of it was  
 not so much as heard of some hundred  
 years after, they wanting a word to ex-  
 press it by, which they were afterwards  
 forc'd to borrow from the Greeks (f).

(f) *Quintil.*

*l. 2. cap.*

14.

As soon as it came among them, we  
 trace it in its effects, for as among the  
*Grecians*, whence it was borrow'd, it  
 had occasion'd Tumults and Concussions  
 of State, especially at *Athens* where it  
 prevail'd most, only *Lacedemon* was  
 more quiet, from whence it was bani-  
 sh'd, and where a plain Laconic Style was  
 in vogue, so at *Rome* when once it had got  
 any footing, and the *Gracchi*, the *Bruti* and  
 other Demagogues begun to harangue  
 the People, there was no more peace in  
 that State, nothing but continual Broils  
 and intestine Commotions, till they had  
 fought themselves out of that liberty  
 which they seem'd to contend for, and  
 their

As if there were  
 no family and  
 privately here  
 this must be  
 as the people  
 more of the peo-  
 ple



their heats ended in the ruine of their Commonwealth. The Roman Orator had seen so much of this in his time, before things were brought to the last extremity, that he begins his Book of (u) (u) De invent. Rhet. l. .. Rhetoric with a doubt, whether that art had brought greater advantage or detriment to the Commonwealth? And if an Orator where he is treating of Eloquence, were so doubtful in the matter; we need not be at a loss on which side to determine the Case.

To pass by consequences, that are not justly chargeable on things, which are generally good or otherwise, according as the persons are that use them, we will consider the art it self. If it be an advantage to any Art, to have been treated of by Men that are skilful in it, this Art should have received greater improvements and be nearer perfection, than most others, having been considered by one of the greatest Masters that ever was. Cicero has compos'd pretty large Treatises upon this Subject, that have been preserv'd and deliver'd down to us; particularly two (x), in the former of which, as he treats of the several kinds, and lays down such Rules, as are necessary to be observ'd in our way to Eloquence; so in the latter he delineates

(x) De Oratore, Orator five Brutus.

neates and gives us the Portraiture of a perfect Orator. I will not pretend to judge of so great a Master; thus much may be said with modesty enough, that as in the first Treatise, the Persons in the Dialogue differ from one another; so in the latter the Orator seems to differ from himself; in the first he is doubtful, in the latter impracticable: In his Dialogue, (which has so much the face of probability, that some among the Learned have mistaken it for a real Conference. The Persons introduc'd are equally Great, and argue and discourse with equal Learning, and he having assign'd no part to himself, consistently with his doubtfulness in this matter, A man may sometimes be at a loss, which side to close with. And his *Orator* is too great and inimitable an example, perfectly imaginary, and consequently of no use in humane life, for which Eloquence is design'd. He himself gives him only an Ideal Being, and owns that he is no where to be found but in the conceptions of our mind.

And indeed we must not expect to find him any where else, if all these things be necessary to an Orator, that he seems to require. For first, *Nature*  
and

and *Genius* are indispensably necessary, without which the wheels being clog'd and under force, will drive heavily; our Orator must have a flowing invention to furnish him with Ideas, a strong imagination to impress them, a happy memory to retain, and a true judgment to dispose them in their due rank and order. He must have Law, to lead him into the knowledge of the Constitution and Customs of his Country, History to acquaint him with examples, Logic to supply him with proper *Topics*, and morality to enable him to penetrate into, and apply to the Manners and Passions of Men, the  $\eta\theta\iota$  and  $\pi\alpha\theta\eta$ , which are the Springs of Action, and sources of perswasion: In short being to treat of every thing, he must be ignorant of nothing. He must be in *Cicero's* language, a *Wise man*, that is a Man of universal knowledge, and what is more a Paradox, he must likewise be a *Good Man*; a Quality that so rarely accompanied Heathen Eloquence, that both *Cicero* and *Quintilian* are much at a plunge in asserting it to the *Greek* and *Roman* Orators. He must not only have a general knowledge of things, but must have skill in adorning them, he must have the greatest Art, and yet at the same time

the skill to conceal it, for when ever Art appears, it loseth its effect, and nothing can please, much less perswade, but what is natural. The most external things are necessary to his accomplishment, he must not only have Eloquence in his words, but likewise in his looks, decent motions, and an air of perswasion, that graceful action and pronounciation, which *Demosthenes* made the first and second and third thing, and which had so great a share in his own Composures, that we are not to wonder, that his Orations please less in the reading, than they did in the deliverance, as wanting three parts of what they had when they were spoke.

These being the qualifications that are necessary to a compleat and perfect Orator, it is next to impossible, there should ever be any such Man. If any such were, in whom all these conditions met, it must have been he who requires them, I mean *Cicero*, who had the happiest *Genius*, and that cultivated with the greatest Art and Industry, that perhaps ever Man had; he whom *Quintilian* (y) opposeth to all the *Gracian* Orators, to whom he gives the Force of *Demosthenes*, the Sweetness of *Isocrates*, and the *Copia* of *Plato*; he whom he styles  
the

(y) L. 10.  
cap. 1. 1

the name not of a Man, but of Eloquence it self, and gives it as a Rule, by which a Man may judge of his own Proficiency in Eloquence, if *Cicero* begins to please him: yet this *Cicero* was so far from pleasing in his own age, that as he met with Detractors among his Enemies, one of which compos'd a Treatise (z) against him, under a very disparaging title, so he did not satisfy *Brutus* among his Friends, who taxeth him with looseness in his composures, and charges him with want of Nerves and strength. And *Quintilian* (a) where he comes to explain himself, tells us, that he styles *Cicero* a Compleat Orator only in the vulgar meaning of the word, for in the strict sense, he was yet to seek, and does not only desire perfection in him, but acquaints us with the faults he was charged with (b) to wit, that he was turgid and swelling in his expressions, too frequent in repetitions, broken in his Composition, and not only easie in his Stile, but soft. In the last age, when Learning begun to revive, and *Cicero* was study'd almost to the neglect of our Bibles, yet one of our Great Critics in the Latine Tongue, could never be reconcil'd to a *Ciceronian*

(z) *Largius*  
*as Livianus,*

*ap. Gell.*  
*l. 17. cap.*

(a) *L. 12.*  
*cap. 1.*

(b) *L. 12.*  
*cap. 10.*

stale, nor could hear him read (e) without weariness and somewhat of loathing.

prohibere potius nec sine assensu audire. v. Gard. Epist. ad Cels. p.  
176.

It is not yet agreed among the learned, which of his Compositions are the most elegant, otherwise it were easier to know where to make our Reflections. Sir *William Temple* brings his Oration for *Labienus*, (d) (whom by an error very pardonable among so many excellencies he mistakes for *Ligarius*) as an Instance of the power of humane Eloquence. It must be confest this is a remarkable instance; here was the Greatest Orator and the Greatest Judge, (for *Caesar* is allow'd by *Cicero* to be one of the most Eloquent Persons of his time) *Caesar* comes into the place of judicature, breathing revenge against *Ligarius*, and with an obstinate resolution to condemn him, but with difficulty is prevail'd with to hear *Cicero* in his Defence, which he gives way to, rather as a thing of meer form, than with any thoughts of yielding to his perswasion: However, no sooner is he heard, but he moves and affects, and when he comes to touch upon

upon *Pharsalia*, the Conqueror has no more Soul left, he takes fire and is transported beyond himself, he shakes and trembles, and drops the Papers that he held in his hand, and in spite of all his resolutions, absolves the Criminal, whom he was determin'd to condemn. And now I think I have allow'd enough to Eloquence, but to deal impartially, the force of it is so great, and the effect of it so wonderful in this Instance, that it would raise a Man's curiosity to enquire into the Cause. Had this Oration been lost, we should have had most terrible Out-cries, and lamentable Complaints among the Learned, of the loss that the world has sustain'd in so consummate a piece. Lo it is yet extant ! and altho' this, as every thing of *Cicero's*, be excellent in its kind, yet so much will be granted, that it may be read without rapture and amazement.

But granting as much force to Eloquence as can be desir'd, how is it, it does persuade, in this and other instances ? I am sure not from rational arguments, which ought to be the proper means of convincing a reasonable Man, but from quite different motives and *Topics* of persuasion: *Cesar's* deliberate, and perhaps most reasonable resolution, was,

was, not to pardon so great a Criminal, an implacable wretch, that had afterwards a hand in the Blood of his Deliverer. The Orator does not so much seek to convince him of the unreasonableness of the thing, as endeavour to prevail with him from other inducements, he applies to his passions instead of his Reason, his weak and blind side, by putting him in mind of the *Pharsalian* Field, of his glory in subduing, and the greater honours he had acquir'd by pardoning; he styles him *Father*, tho at the same time he thought him an Usurper, and bids him remember, it was his People that beg'd *Ligarius* of him, and that he could not do a more popular thing, than by yielding to their requests and giving way to his usual Clemency. Such are the Topics that are brought from Rhetoric! The truth of it is, our common Eloquence is usually a cheat upon the Understanding, it deceives us with appearances, instead of things, and makes us think we see reason, whilst it is tickling our sense: Its strongest proofs, do often consist in an artificial turn of words, and beautiful expressions, which if unravel'd, its strength is gone and the reason is destroyed.

There



There are few that read *Seneca*, that do not imagine, he writes with great force and strength, his thoughts are lofty, almost every line in him is a Sentence, and every Sentence does seem a Reason, and yet it has been well observ'd, by a Master in the Art of thinking, (e) who has taken some pains in unravelling some of his loftiest expressions, that there is little more in him at the bottom, than a Pomp of Words.

(e) *Malbranche.*  
*Recherch.*  
*Par. 3. l.*  
*2. ch. 4.*

And the same observation is made there, upon two other Authors, the one of whom is not so proper to be mention'd, the other is not worth the mention: All of them are known, and are as much quoted, and will go as far in popular discourses as Authors of closer thought.

It is not enough to say, that this is the fault of these Authors and not of Eloquence, for its end being to persuade, and the persons whom we are to deal with being usually the People, who as they are the most, are not generally the wisest, if we would persuade them, we must suit our selves to their capacities, otherwise we must be content to lose our end. An apposite Similitude is argument with them, and a quaint saying

saying will go farther than a substantial Reason, for being guided by imagination, they are most affected with sensible resemblances, and not having capacity to penetrate into things, that which is easiest and lies uppermost persuades them most: So that unless we could make them wise, they will be easy and credulous, and will be led by appearances instead of truth. And this is one reason, why Eloquence could never flourish, at least not arrive to any considerable height, unless it were among a people, that had understandings above the ordinary size, such as the *Athenians* once were, and afterwards the *Romans*: And for the same reason it is, that the wisest Men are not always the best Orators, either at the *Bar* or in the *Chair*, for they are too much above the People's level, their Artillery shoots over, and it is no wonder if they miss their aim. And if it be yet said, there is notwithstanding such a thing as true Eloquence, that will always have its force with Wisemen; I grant there is, but besides that this is to restrain it to a very narrow compass, Wise Men will be most guided by wise considerations, such as are grounded upon close Argument and Rational

tional Conclusions, which are more properly the business of Logic than of Rhetoric and Eloquence.

Having gone thus far in my reflections, principally with regard to the Ancient Orators, it is almost needless to examine the Moderns; some of their Patrons in other sorts of Learning, have given up the comparison in this; so that if the Ancients are found to be wanting in perfection, we are not to expect to find it in the Moderns. However a word or two of them. The *French* have shown most care in this particular, among whom, an Academy has been erected for the refining their Language; the Members whereof have spent whole days in examining the propriety of a word, and have been no less accurate in studying the Beauties and Ornaments of Speech and Numerosity of their periods: But I doubt the observation is true, that whilst they have been so scrupulously nice, they have run into the fault of over much accuracy, and by adding Beauty to their Language have broken its strength; by spinning and refining it, and giving it too much paint and flourish, much of its masculine strength is lost, and I have sometimes thought, that it boded not well to that

So.

(f) *Mad.  
de Scudery.*

Society, that their first Prize of Eloquence was given to a Woman (f). It is certainly a fault in Oratory to be too curious in the choice of words, a bold Period tho' against Rule will please more, than to be always in phrase, and a decent negligence is often a beauty in expression, as well as Dress; whereas by being over correct or always flourishing, our periods become either too luscious or too stiff. And yet thosome Members of the *French Academy* have pretty freely censur'd this fault, and have deservedly laugh'd at some Gentlemen, that did not only mispend their time in study'd Periods, but in avoiding rough and un-sounding words, it is plain some of their own Brethren have run into the same fault, and have been curious and affected in their style, almost to a degree of Superstition. For what can be said less of him who compos'd (g) a large Book in five Volumes, in all which he declin'd making use of a common and almost unavoidable word (h), only because it did not please him? or did M. *Vaugelas* employ his time better, who having undertaken the translation of *Quintus Curtius*, no very great performance, spent thirty years in translating his Author, and yet left it an unfinish'd work?

(g) *M. de  
Gomber-  
ville v.  
Hist. Acad.  
Franc. p.  
50.  
(h) Car.*

work? In which work it is very remarkable, that having left five or six different Translations in the Margin of his Book, that which stood first was generally approv'd of as the best (i) as containing his first and natural thoughts, whereas the others were probably more forc'd and strain'd.

But Mr. *Pelisson* in his History of the *Academy*, has given us a *Panegyrick* upon the *French King*, which I suppose is design'd as a Specimen of French Eloquence, and being there in five different Languages, every man may read it in a known tongue, and be able in some measure to judge, to what degree of perfection Oratory has arriv'd among our Neighbours: tho the truth of it is, the English Translation is wretchedly mangl'd, and so different from the Authors sense, that it ceases to be his. However take it in the Original, I believe it will not be pretended, that he has painted out his *Hero*, in such charming colours, as either *Pliny* has done his *Trajan*, or *Cicero*, *Pompy* in one of his Orations (k), or *Cesar* in another. The *Academies* Rhetoric is yet wanting, which they have given us an expectation of, both in the same History and in the Preface to their Dictionary. But that

(i) E. 7.  
213.

(k) Pro  
lege Mar-  
tia. Pro  
Mureto. 3  
Lig.

that work having cost them forty years, and a Grammar being in order their next undertaking, if that likewise should employ them a proportionable time, their Rules of Eloquence seem reserv'd for Posterity and not for us.

The English as they have not taken the same pains nor pursu'd the design with equal industry with their Neighbours, by erecting Societies for the improvement of Oratory; so whatever their performances have been, they have been more modest in their pretensions. For tho the French have compos'd large volumes upon this Subject, with much Ostentation, yet I scarce know of any, that have been publish'd by the English, whether it be that there *Genius* inclines them to strength rather than beauty, or that trusting to their native force they despise the fineness of Art. They have indeed been charg'd by their Neighbours (1) with a sort of Eloquence that is not very charming, in beginning their discourses generally with some Prophecy or surprising Story, which if it were true, is not perhaps so much to be attributed to their want of skill, as to their compliance with the humor of a People, that attend too much to Prophecies, and are too much affected with

(1) *V. comin.*  
*ap. Fourn.*  
*Des Scav.*  
*An. 65.*  
*p. 100.*

with stories: But however, it were 200 years ago, when the observation was first made, it is otherwise now, when Oratory after the many changes, it has undergone, has put on a quite different face: tho even from those frequent alterations, its instability is too remarkable, and would tempt a man to think, that in some measure it depends upon humor, and has not so unmoveable a Foundation as might be wisht.

For to look back a very little, in those dark times, it is not impossible, that Eloquence was much about that pitch, the observation would have it, in a blind age, when Legends were in fashion, and the People were kept in Ignorance and led by Wonder, a Reformation in Religion brought with it an advancement in Learning, and as Elegancy begun then to be restor'd to the Latin Tongue, so in Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign, the Writers of that age, seem to have affected a *Ciceronian* style in English, both in the length of their periods, and often by throwing the verb to the end of the Sentence: The succeeding Reign degenerated rather than improv'd, when the generality run into an affected way of writing and nothing

E would

would please, without a fantastick Dress and jingle of words. And tho in the following Reign, this way of writing was much laid a side, yet even then they larded their Discourses so thick with Sentences of Greek and Latin, that as things now are, it would be a hard matter to excuse them from Pedantry. What sort of Oratory obtain'd in the late times of Confusion, is well known, especially in the Pulpit: As if the observation of our Neighbours had been calculated for them, little Similitudes and odd Examples, and a worse sort of Cant, was the Eloquence, of these times, which notwithstanding charm'd the People to that degree, that it hurry'd them besides themselves, and almost out of their Wits. And tho Oratory may be thought to be now at its full height, and we may flatter our selves, that nothing can be added to the Strength and Solidity of those Discourses, that are published among us almost every day, upon every Subject; yet I will not undertake, but that somewhat may be produc'd in the next age, so much more perfect, at least more pleasing, than any thing we yet have, that the present Eloquence shall be lookt upon by  
our



our Posterity with the same neglect, with which we now treat the performances of our Fore-fathers. No doubt, what they writ, pleas'd their own age, as much as our most boasted Pieces please now, and we ought not to be too confident in our own performances, with disregard to other ages; unless we will make our selves the Standard of Eloquence and not give other men leave to judge of us, as we have done of those before us.

I know no reason, why it may not vary according to times as well as places, which, in the latter case it so evidently does, That, that which is lookt upon as Elegant in one Nation, would be laugh'd at by another People. The Eastern Nations are so different from us in their style, that could our most Elegant Composers be understood by them, they would be thought flat and insipid, they being so accustomed to Sublime and Lofty Expressions, that nothing will affect them, but what is fetch'd from the Sun and Moon and Stars. And nearer home, where the difference ought not to be so considerable, the *French* and *Italians*, who have taken such pains, and spent so much time in  
E 2                      polish-

polishing their Style, yet charge one another with imperfections in their way of writing, and both of them differ from the *English*. Every Nation can discover faults in their Neighbours, and do not consider, that their Neighbours see the like faults to blame in them.

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C H A P.

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CHAP V.  
Of LOGIC.

**L**ogic in the Modern phrase is the Art of thinking, and being designed for a help or Instrument of Reason, its very nature implies weakness in the understanding ; and therefore we ought not to value our selves too much upon our ability, in giving subtle Rules and finding out logical Arguments, since it would be more perfection not to want them. God Almighty who sees all things intuitively does not want these helps, he neither stands in need of Logic, nor uses it ; but we whose understandings are short, are forc'd to collect one thing from another, and in that process we seek out proper *Mediums*, and call in all other helps, that may be subservient to reason.

There was little considerable done in this matter before *Aristotle*, (for the *Elevic* Logic was only an Art of Wrangling,

ling, as the *Academic*, was of doubting) He was the great-advancer of this Art, infomuch that ever since his time, the main grounds of reasoning have been borrow'd from him, even by those that have despis'd him. But as nothing can be begun and perfected together, so his Logic has been charg'd with several defects; for whereas all Logic is properly reduceable to the four principal operations of the Mind, the two first of these, have been handled by *Aristotle* very perfunctorily, to say no worse, and of the fourth he has said nothing at all: Most of his time has been spent upon the third operation, of which he has treated so largely, that his Logic is in effect, an Art of Syllogizing. In this he glories as his own invention, and has been so much valu'd upon it by some, that it has been stil'd by a modern Author, (m) *the greatest effort of humane Wit*. But tho the Invention be confessedly extraordinary, to reduce our vague thoughts and loose reasonings, that are almost infinite to certain Rules, and make them conclude in *Mode* and *Figure*; yet whosoever considers the nature of a Syllogism, in how many things it may be false in the Matter and peccant in Form, That not only the

*Terms*

(m) *Rapin.*  
*Reflex. sur.*  
*la log. p.*  
 375.

*Terms* and Propositions must answer to one another, but must be adapted to the notions of things, and that these two are hard to be connected ; whilst every little slip in a Proposition or Ambiguity in a word can spoil the Syllogism, will have a less opinion of its conclusiveness and will find it a hard thing, to bind any Syllogism so close upon the mind, as not to be evaded under some plausible distinction.

Another modern (n) I am sure had this opinion of the matter, for which reason he thought it necessary to seek out another sort of Logic. (n) Bacon. Nov. Org. p. 50.

I only hint at the principal operations of the mind, for if I should descend to less particulars, there are few things in *Aristotle*, that have not been excepted against by modern Authors; some of whom have gone so far as to question the genuineness of his Books, because forsooth, they cannot discover in them that *Flamen Orationis*, that *Cicero* speaks of. But tho there can be no sufficient ground to think them spurious, notwithstanding better arguments have been brought to that purpose by an Eminent Philosopher of these later ages (o), yet we have too much reason to believe, they were much corrupted, from (o) Fic. Mirand. Tom. 2. p. 663, &c.

(p) V. lib.  
23.

*Strabo's* (p) account of their having been mutilated and consumed with moisture, by being bury'd so long under ground in *Greece* after *Aristotle's* death; and after they were brought to *Rome*, by having been again mangled by ignorant Transcribers: So that it is hard to know, how much we have of *Aristotle*.

The Logic in use among the *Romans* was rather a sort of Rhetoric than Logic, in which sense it is generally to be understood, where we meet with mention of it among them: It was first borrow'd from the *Stoics*, who were in vogue at *Rome*, before *Aristotle* was much known there; and their Logic having been rather Specious than Solid, as consisting much in pomp of words, and in giving plausible colours to improbable things, was best fitted to that People, who were little farther concerned for that Art, than as it was of use in point of Eloquence. And tho *Cicero* takes in *Aristotle*, especially in the *Topical* part, that has most affinity with Rhetoric, yet it is plain, he has likewise followed the *Stoics*, tho it was not reputable enough to be own'd. What the *Romans* have done upon this Subject is not worth much notice, having had little

little occasion to make use of this Art, and what they have of it to purpose being borrow'd from *Aristotle*; the active Life was their business, and disputing never seems to have been much in fashion with them.

However when *Cicero* begun to revive in these latter ages, this sort of Logic was again attempted; the Men of nice Palats could not relish *Aristotle*, as he was dress'd up by the *Schoolmen*, and were so madly struck with *Cicero*, that they thought all sort of Learning was to be borrow'd from his Stores; *Cicero* is drawn in beyond his Province, and his *Topics* ransack'd to frame a Logic: But tho these Men were extraordinary Persons, yet nothing shows more plainly, how necessary it is for Men to keep within their proper bounds; For when they come to treat of this matter, it is so foreign and unweildy in their hands, that they make very ordinary work: They bring indeed some plausible objections against *Aristotle*, and so far they are within their proper Sphere, but when they should lay down somewhat new of their own, they either offer nothing, or what they do, is so unsuccessfully, as only to show that they are out of their Element, and that

Logic

Logic is none of their Talent. I speak this of the first Reformers of Learning, for tho *Ramus* run in with them, in his opposition to *Aristotle*, yet he has out-done them in this, that he himself has given us a plausible *Systeme*; (For I cannot look upon *Valla's* performance to be so much) which tho it was much read and commented on, upon its first appearing in the world, yet seems now to be dis-regarded, and in the next age may probably be forgot.

My Lord Bacon saw clearer into the defects of this Art, than most Men did, and being neither satisfied with the vulgar Logic, nor with its Reformation that were made, suitably to his vast and enterprizing Genius, attempted a Logic wholly new, the Plan of which is laid down in his *Novum Organum*. The way of Syllogizing seem'd to him very fallacious and too dependent upon words, to be much rely'd on, his search was after things, and therefore he brought in a new way of arguing from *Induction*, and that grounded upon Observation and Experiments: Tho this Plan as laid down by him, looks liker an *Universal Art*, than a distinct Logic, and the design is too great and the Induction too large to be made by one Man,



Man, or any Society of Men in one Age, if at all practicable: For whatever opinion he might have of the conclusiveness of this way, one cross circumstance in an Experiment, would as easily overthrow his *Induction*, as an ambiguous word would disorder a Syllogism, and a Man needs only make tryal, in any part of natural History, as left us by my *Lord Bacon*, to see, how conclusive his *Induction* was like to have been. To say nothing, that notwithstanding his blaming the Common Logics, as being too much spent in words, himself runs into the fault, that he condemns; for what else can we make of his *Idola Tribus*, *Idola Specus*, *Fori*, *Theatri*; or of his *Instantie Solitaria*, *migrantes*, *Ostensiva*, *Clandestina*, *Constitutiva*, &c. but fine words put to express very common and ordinary things?

After the way of free thinking had been lai'd open by my *Lord Bacon*, it was soon after greedily follow'd, for the Understanding affects Freedom as well as the Will, and Men will pursue liberty, tho it ends in Confusion. The *Cartesians* have been observ'd to be no friends to Logic, their Master has left nothing extant upon that Subject, except

cept some scatter'd expressions; unless a Treatise of method must be interpreted a Logic, which notwithstanding is more properly metaphysical. One of his first Principles of Reasoning, after he had doubted of every thing, seems to be too circular to be safely built upon, for he is for proving the Being of a God from the truth of our Faculties, and the truth of our Faculties from the Being of a God; he had better have suppos'd our Faculties to be true, for they being the Instruments that we make use of in all our proofs and deductions, unless we suppose them to be true, we are at a stand, and can go no farther in our proofs: So that the way of supposing seems to be more rational than that of doubting.

The notion of perceiving things by *Ideas* is of a piece with this, which however plausible it might seem when first started, after it came to be examin'd Men's *Ideas* about the same objects happened to be so vastly different, and that in things that were the most clearly and distinctly perceiv'd, that it was a great prejudice against this opinion. There are few of the first started *Ideas*, that have not been examin'd and many of them effectually confuted, by the late Im-

Improvers of this way, and other *Ideas* substituted in their room, which have given no more satisfaction to others, than the first did to them; and till we can agree about some Rule or Standard, by which to measure and adjust our *Ideas*, it is only a loose way of thinking, and there can be no end of Controversie this way: Altho there be little hopes of this, whilst we have reason to believe, that nothing pleaseth more in this way, than the liberty it gives, or which every Man takes of framing new and fine *Ideas*. I am no enemy to free thinking, yet I must always wish, we might proceed by some Rule, (for a Rule is no Bar but a perfection of freedom) otherwise I am sure, there is no agreement to be expected, and it is to be feared we shall end in Confusion. Clear and distinct perception has been given us for a Rule, and the conformity of our *Ideas* with the Reality of things has been given as another; but it is no good proof of either, that Men have differ'd much in some of those things, that have been suppos'd to be the most clearly perceiv'd, and most agreeably to the nature of things. The great difficulty is, in discovering that Conformity,

formity, or in clearing and distinguishing our thoughts; for every Man's *I*deas are clear to himself.

It would be lookt upon as an omission to pass by the *Art of thinking* supposed to be writ by *M. Arnault* (q); The best part of it must be own'd to be borrow'd from *Aristotle*, only by cloathing old *Terms*, under new *Ideas*, which shows that it is not so easie to frame a new Logic as a new Philosophy, and gives a ground of suspicion, that this Philosophy is not at perfect amity with reason, otherwise they might more easily be adapted to one another. One thing upon which this Author values himself is, his substituting useful Instances, in the place of those trivial common ones formerly in use with the old Logicians, which he makes an objection to the old way: But can it be an objection to any thing, that it is suited to the end, for which it was design'd? the use of Instances is to illustrate and explain a difficulty, and this end is best answered by such Instances as are familiar and common: whereas the Instances which this Man brings, are usually taken from other Sciences, and suppose Men to be wise already, contrary to the

(q) *L' Art  
de pens.  
Par. 68.*

the intention of Logic, which is only an introduction to other Sciences, and being fitted for Beginners, supposeth our knowledge to be yet weak, and is design'd for an Instrument to help us forward. And yet there is a worse objection against his Instances, that many of them being borrow'd from an unground and corrupt Divinity, they can hardly be read by Beginners without danger of being corrupted: For such false Opinions were never more contagious, than when they are held forth to us under such plausible appearances, nor are their impressions ever like to be more lasting, than when they are suckt in with the principles of Reason. I will not say, that these opinions are sown there on purpose, that they might grow up with our Reason, but where so much Divinity is mixt with our Logic, it is very suspicious that it has a meaning.

The last Systeme of Logic that I have met with, is the *Medicina Mentis* which has been esteemed the Best, and, for ought I know, may maintain that Character till a new one appears: It is not safe to censure an Author of so established a reputation, only thus much a  
Man

(r) *Medi-*  
*cin. Ment.*  
*Pras.*

(f) *Ib.*  
*Par. 2. p.*  
43.

Man may venture to say, That it seems to be too strong Physic for most men's Constitutions, and it looks so like a Mountebank to boast of Infallible Cures (r) that I could not but have a less opinion of this Author. He makes light account of the former Logicians; and Perception which was thought to be so clear a mark of truth, is shown by him to be often the effect of Imagination, (f) and therefore he fetcheth his *Criterion* higher, which he placeth in *Conception*, or a yet higher degree of Cogitation. But whether knowledge be grounded in Perception or *Conception* seems not very material, provided they could show us the way, how to find it: This is what we desire; and the telling us, we must assent to nothing, of which we have not a *Conception*, does not seem to further our search over much. It serves well to another purpose, to show us the shortness of our Reach, for if we must assent to nothing without *Conception*, we must needs know very little, there being few things, that we conceive perfectly. I am apt to think Mr. T. has borrow'd some hints from this Author, tho he has apply'd them to purposes, the Author never meant, and

and indeed flatly disavows: For the Author seems to mean well, only is too fanciful a Man, to make an extraordinary Logician, and whoever reads his *Medicina Corporis* will be confirmed in this opinion: If his Rules of Reason be not better suited to the mind, than his Rules for Health are fitted for our Bodies, he is not like to be much follow'd.

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## C H A P. VI.

*Of Moral Philosophy.*

**M**orality may be consider'd two ways, as an Habit, or a Rule ; either as it is in us, or as an Art for the conduct of Life and a Doctrine of Manners : In both respects, it is very imperfect, if consider'd only in its own strength, and without the assistances of Revelation ; Philosophy being as unable to give Rules, as nature is to practise them. Most of the Philosophers and some of grosser capacities were sensible of this, they were so far bewildred in their search after happiness, as to be able to perceive their own wanderings, and could feel the disorders of their nature ; But how to return into the way, or remedy these disorders was beyond their power.

*Socrates*



*Socrates* was the first, who, after the Philosophers had tir'd themselves out in the search of nature, with little success, observing the great uncertainties and vanity of such enquiries, brought down Philosophy from fruitless Speculations, to the uses of Life: His opinions in Morality were clearer and much better grounded, than those of most of the succeeding Sects; having had truer notions of God, of the Immortality of the Soul and future Rewards, than the rest had, without which, all virtue is a floating unstable thing, wanting both its due end and sufficient foundation. But though he was clearer than most of the rest were, yet he expresseth himself too doubtfully, to be depended on: Most of his Philosophy is in broken Sentences, deliver'd with much doubtfulness, and his dying words are well known, when he had least to fear, which are so full of Diffidence, that they can give little encouragement to others to follow him. He proposeth his sense, as a probable opinion, of the truth whereof, he had conceiv'd good hopes, from its agreeableness with the Divine Goodness, and the order of Providence; rather than built upon such solid Principles, as would give assurance, and bear

Men up in the discharge of their duty, where it meets with Reproaches and Discouragements, the usual attendants of Vertue.

*Plato* does little more than Copy from his Master, and being aw'd by his hard Fate, speaks yet with more reserve; his most Divine Dialogue, is chiefly a relation of *Socrates's* opinions, and an account of the discourses he had with his Scholars, sometime before he dy'd (1).

of P. Plat.  
on the  
d.

And both the *Socratic* and *Platonic* way having been enemies to dogmatizing, and rather doubting and denying than asserting any thing; we are not to expect certainty, where it is not pretended to.

*Aristotle* is more noted for his order, in bringing Morality into Systeme, by treating of Happiness under Heads; and ranging it in Classes according to its different objects, and distinguishing virtues into their several kinds, which had not been handled Systematically before, than for any real improvement he made in this sort of knowledge: which was a diviner thing in *Plato's* Dialogues, although only lax and moral Discourses, than it was under all the advantages, that *Aristotle* could give it, by reducing it into order; whilst he wanted the  
only

only thing, that could render it amiable.

As for the rest of the Philosophers, they generally go upon false Principles, That Sect of them, which was strictest in its institution, and pretended to the greatest perfection, the *Stoics*, were more extravagant than most others were: Their Rule was to live up to Nature, which as they understood it, was to divest themselves of Humanity; for that was to be laid aside, and an absolute unconcernedness to be embrac'd, in order to the happiness, they were to be possess'd of: Their wiseman was to be Rich and Powerful, and every way Happy in the midst of Torments: All good with them was equal and alike, only their wiseman was somewhat above the Gods (*u*). In short their Philosophy was all Paradox, it made a great show, and dazled those that look'd no farther than appearance, but was nothing more at the bottom, than an Ostentation of Wisdom.

It were tedious to recount the various opinions of the Heathen Moralists, which in a short compass of time, were grown so numerous, that it gave occasion to the *Sceptics*, to dispute the Truth of all, and to assert that there was nothing

(x) V. Sext.  
Empiric.  
l. 1. c. 12.

thing true or false, good or evil; and consequently to place their happiness in a perfect *indifference*, an *ἀδιαφορία* in the understanding, and *μνηστικότητα* in the will (x). This was to go beyond the *Stoics*, who, as they could feel no pain, so these Romantic Heroes could taste Happiness, without being affected with pleasure. Their Master *Pyrron*, who flourished about the time of *Zeno*, was so struck with this Principle, that if a Chariot or wild Beast came in his way, he scorn'd to turn aside, and must often have perished, had he not been preserv'd by his friends. He was best answer'd by the Dog in *Diogenes Laertius* (y) which coming upon him by surprise, ere the Philosopher had time to consider, made nature start back, and the Philosopher confess, that such imaginary principles will not hold.

(y) lib. 9.  
vit. Pyrron.

(z) V. Aug.  
de Civ.  
Dei l. 19.  
c. 1.

In *Varro's* time the different opinions were so extravagantly multiply'd, that in his Book of Philosophy (z), he reckons up two hundred and eighty eight several opinions, only concerning the *Summum Bonum*. And if the difference were so great concerning the ultimate end, which all men desire, and in which, if any thing, the common sense of mankind should seem to agree; we may easily  
imagine

imagine what agreement there was, in other less ends and particular Duties. I need not show it, it is a common Theme, and may be seen in every Treatise of morality.

But tho morality may have been very imperfect amongst the Philosophers, it is otherwise, I suppose, with us, who have better light and a surer Rule for our direction, than they had: It is true it is so, whilst we keep to our Rule, but when we forsake that, we go astray like other Men. Our modern Casuists, especially the Jesuits, afford too clear an evidence of this, who by starting nice Cases and philosophizing upon them, have brought us back in some things to the state of Philosophers; they have already given us a new Notion of Philosophical Sin, which as stated by them, has no such sting in it, as to deter most Men from its Commission: Their Theses are printed, that were to be maintain'd by the Jesuits at *Dijon*, the first of which is, *Peccatum Philosophicum seu morale, est Actus humanus disconveniens naturæ Rationali & Rectæ Rationi; Theologicum vero & mortale est transgressio libera legis Divina: Philosophicum quantumvis grave, in illo qui Deum vel ignorat, vel de Deo acta non cogitat, est grave Peccatum, sed*

*non est offensa Dei, neque Peccatum mortale dissolvens amicitiam Dei, neque aeternâ panâ dignum* : A Thesis indeed very favourable to the Heathen Philosophers, but impossible to be reconcil'd to the Principles of the Gospel. It has been reprinted at the *Hague* (a), and sufficiently answer'd and expos'd by a good hand, tho' nothing can expose it more, than naming it.

(a) *Nouv. Her. dans la moral. A la Haye*  
89.

This is only one of their Casuistical Decisions, a large Collection of which may be had in the *Jesuits Morals* (b), which as represented by a Doctor of the *Sorbonn*, and he quotes their own licensed Authors, is such a System of morality, as the Heathen Philosophers would blush to own. According to the Doctrine of that *Morale*, how many sins are there, that may be committed, and what duties that may not be evaded in some degree, or under some distinction ? Their one Doctrine of *Probability*, is a ground of as much liberty, as an ordinary sinner can desire ; for if a Man may act upon a probable opinion, and an opinion becomes then probable, when it is supported by one Reason, or maintained only by one Doctor (c), I will venture to affirm, there are few things so hard in morality, that have

(b) *Morale des Jéf. Amonj.*  
1667.

(c) *Thom. 2. 2. 48.*  
158.

have been defended by the loosest Moralists, that have not been maintain'd by some of the Jesuits, as cited in that Book. And yet this is not the utmost liberty, these nice Casuists and Indulgent Fathers have allow'd; they go farther, and where there are two probable opinions, a man may act upon that which is less probable, nay he may venture upon an opinion that is only probably probable; which is certainly as low a degree of probability, as can well be imagin'd; and I do not see, how they can go lower, unless they would allow a man to act upon an opinion that is improbable.

It might have been expected, that where so many hard opinions have been charg'd upon the Jesuits, as have been produc'd in the *Jesuits Morals*, they should say somewhat in their own defence: Somewhat indeed they have said, and one of the Pleas they insist upon most is, that many of the same opinions are maintain'd by the Scholemen, some of whom were canoniz'd, and their Books generally receiv'd in the Church of Rome: But whatever opinion they may have of such a defence, it is nothing to us, who bring the same charge against the Scholemen, that we  
do

do against the Jesuits, as far as they maintain the same opinions, and we think them the more dangerous, if they have not only been defended by Jesuits, but by such men, as by having been receiv'd into the Catalogue of Romish Saints, have in a manner canoniz'd their opinions, by being canoniz'd themselves, and made their Church in some measure answerable for them: Tho' to do that Church right, others of her Members have taken offence at such Doctrines, particularly the *Jansenists*; and among the *Benedictines*, Father *Mabillon*, tho' otherwise reserv'd enough in his Censures, yet where such loose Casuists come in his way, cannot forbear giving them a lash, and declaring it his opinion, that a Man may read *Tully's Offices* with more profit than he can do certain Casuists (d): which tho' smart enough, as coming from a modest humble Man, yet another Frenchman has said a severer thing, where he defines morality as treated by the Casuists, *L'art de chicaner avec Dieu*; and indeed in their way of handling, it looks liker an Art to ease men from the Burthen of rigorous Precepts, by showing them the utmost bounds they may go without Sin, than what it should be,

(d) *Erud.  
monast.  
Par.  
2. 6. 7.*



they we they uns, om with iz'd am- me to her ch ts; her gh ose or- g ad ne o' o- a- e e ; , a direction for the Ease of tender Con- sciences, by shewing men their duty in particular Cases.

To speak the whole matter in one word, a good Conscience and an upright Man will see his duty with only a moderate share of Casuistical skill, but into a perverse heart, this sort of wisdom enters not: It is usually some lust to be gratified or danger to be avoided, which perverts the Judgment in practical Duties, but were men as much afraid of sin as they are of danger, there would be few occasions of consulting our Casuists.

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## C H A P. VII.

*Of Natural Philosophy.*

**P**hysical knowledge taking in the whole Compass of Nature, is too vast a Subject to be comprehended by humane mind ; it is an unexhaustible Mine, wherein we may always dig and yet never come at the bottom : For tho the things it treats of be material objects, and as such sensible and easie, yet when we come to treat of them in a Philosophical manner, they shun our sense, and are liable to equal difficulties, with nicer matters. There is nothing more common in nature, than matter and motion, or more easily distinguish'd, but then we must understand them to be so only in their grosser meaning, for if we speak of subtle matter and *intestine* motion, they escape the nicest scrutiny of Sense : And yet these are the secret Springs of most of the operations in nature, and as for gross matter and

and visible motion, they are rather of mechanical consideration. A Philosopher's business is to trace Nature in her inward Recesses and Latent motions, and how hid these are, is best known to those, who are most conversant in Philosophical Enquiries: Such men by looking deep into her, and observing her in all her windings and mazes, find matter enough for Wonder, and reason to adore the Wisdom of God, but at the same time only meet with mortification to their own Wisdom and are forc'd to confess, that the ways of Nature like those of God, are past Man's finding out.

*Aristotle* who has gone so far in his rational Enquiries, has given us little insight into Physical Truths; for having fram'd a Body of Physics out of his own Head, all the various *Phænomena* of Nature were to be suited to his Philosophy, instead of his Philosophy's being drawn from Observations in Nature: His reasoning which did well in Logics, was somewhat out of place, and misguided him here, where he was rather to be led by Observation; and where he does make observations they are usually unphilosophical, and such as few men could be ignorant of: His four Elements

lements are gross things, and leave the understanding at the same pitch where it was, and his three Principles do not advance it much higher; his first Principle as he has explain'd it, is unintelligible, and the last of the three is no Principle at all, unless we will allow that for one Principle, that is destructive of another: He tells us, that all knowledge is to be deriv'd from the Senses, and yet presently forsakes that, and flies to Reason. But his Philosophy is enough decry'd already, and needs not be brought lower than it is.

I need not here reckon up the opinions of other Ancient Philosophers; most of them have been reviv'd, and have been again confuted, and have dy'd the second time in our own Age: The opinion of *Thales* and the *Ionic* Sect, in making Water the Principle of all things, has been reviv'd by those, who have attempted to explicate a Deluge from such an Original: And the opinion of *Pythagoras* and the *Italic* Sect, in placing the Sun in the Center of the world, and ascribing motion to the Earth, has been maintain'd a-new by *Copernicus* and his Followers; and tho' *Transmigration* of Souls be one of *Pythagoras's* hardest sayings, yet it has found a Patron of late in

Countryman of our own (e), who has <sup>(e) Mr. Bulstrode.</sup> maintain'd it in a qualify'd Sense, which perhaps was as much as *Pythagoras* meant. An *Anima Mundi*, Præ-existence of Souls, with the rest of *Plato's* opinions, have found a strong party in their defence; and many other late opinions, which have little in them, except their novelty to recommend them to the world, do really want that too, and might be easily shown, to be only the spawn of the Ancient Philosophers; by whom as there is nothing so absurd, that has not been said, so they have scarce said any thing so extravagant, wherein they have not been follow'd.

But among all the ancient opinions, none have been reviv'd with more general approbation, than those of *Democritus* and *Epicurus*, the Founders of the Atomical or Corpuscular Philosophy; still omen to Religion, when they who have explicated the production of the world, by the Laws of Mechanism without a God, have been so generally follow'd. In this *M. Des Cartes* has been too successful, whom tho it would be very unjust to charge with the denial of a God, whom he supposeth to have created matter, and to have impressed the first

*Bur. Hogg.*

first motion upon it, yet in this he is blameable, that after the first motion is impress'd, and the wheels set a going, he leaves this vast Machine, to the Laws of Mechanism, and supposeth that all things may be thereby produc'd, without any further extraordinary assistance from the first impressor. The supposition is impious, and as he states it destructive of it self; for not to deny him his Laws of motion, most of which have been evidently shown to be false, and consequently so must all be that is built upon them, his Notion of Matter is inconsistent with any motion at all; for as Space and Matter are with him the same, upon this supposition there can be no *vacuum*, and there can be no motion of a *Plenum*: Motion is only the succession of Bodies from one place to another, but how should they succeed from one place, if there be no room to receive them in the next, which there cannot be, if all be full? And the difficulty is still greater upon the first framing of things, before the subtile matter is produc'd, that was to suit it self, to all the little Interstices, betwixt the larger solid Bodies, which must needs clog and interfere with one another, unless we will allow some fluid matter, that will

will yeild and give way to the other's motions. *M. Des Cartes* imagines he answers all this, by a succession of Bodies in a Circular Motion; but I think this Motion carries its own Confutation with it, and that nothing can be suppos'd more absurd, than to imagin, that upon the motion of every little Atome, the whole frame of things must be disturb'd and set a going. Motion is one of *M. Des Cartes's* darling Principles, and by this and matter, he pretends to solve the greatest difficulties, that are in Nature, and it is very remarkable, that he has not fail'd more in any of his Notions, than in these two great Fundamentals of his Philosophy, for allowing him these, his other explications hang together somewhat better. But this it is to frame *Hypotheses* out of one's own imagination, without consulting Nature, which *M. Des Cartes* has not done, for it was equal to him, what *Hypotheses* he went upon, and had Father *Merjennus* (f) told him, that a *vacuum* was as much in fashion, and as agreeable to the taste of the Age, as a *Plenum* then seem'd to be, we should have had an *Hypothesis* grounded upon a *vacuum*, and no doubt as specious and plausible, as that we now have; perhaps more plausible,

(f) *Y. Ra-  
pin. Reflex.  
p. 423.*

sible, being more consonant to his own Sense, as having been his first design, and the other only hammer'd out by the direction of his confident *Mersennus*: And it is a wonderful thing, that men should run mad after such an *Hypothesis*, which, as it has not the least ground in Nature, so the Author himself never believ'd it. It has been answer'd and effectually confuted in all its Branches, by several hands, but by none better, than by the Author of, *A Voyage to the World of Des Cartes*, which tho' not always conclusive, is every where ingenious, and confutes him in his own way, for one Romance is best answer'd by another.

But we have been taught to distinguish betwixt *Hypotheses* and *Theories*, the latter of which are shew'd things, as being built upon Observations in Nature, whereas *Hypotheses* may be only Chimæraes: I should be glad to see that *Theory*, that is built upon such Observations, The most plausible *Theory* I have yet met with, is only built upon an *Hypothesis*, to wit, the Incrustation of the Earth, and the cracking of its *Cortex*, the very same we have been speaking of, and how this *Theory* should be more certain, than the *Hypothesis* it goes



goes upon, is past my understanding: Thus much I believe may be said of all our *Theories*, That, however natural they may seem at first view, they have always some mark in nature set upon them, to discover them to be false: Thus *Dr. B's Theory*, of the Iucrustation of the Earth is very ingenious, but then there is no sufficient provision made, for Antidiluvian Waters, much less for Springs and Rivers, which can neither be generated, nor flow in Streams without Mountains. *Mr. W's Theory*, shows a vast reach and depth in this Contrivance, both in his accounting for the formation of things, and in his Explication of a Deluge; But his Paradisiacal days are so long, by his allowing only an annual motion to the Sun in that State, as to exceed all belief; and tho he makes a tolerable shift; to supply us with such stores of waters, from the *Atmosphere* of a Comet, as might occasion a Deluge, yet it is impossible for him to carry them off again after the occasion is over; and for ought I can see, they must have continu'd with us, till the return of his Comet. And tho *Dr. W's Theory* be very natural and so pious as to incline a good man to wish it true, yet I am afraid, the Dr. will never

be able to prove it so, for want (amongst other things,) of such an universal *Mensurum* as shall dissolve all things except *his* Shells. So that whatever differences may be alledg'd betwixt *Hypotheses* and *Theories*, they are much upon the same level, as to any real light they have yet afforded to Nature, and one great difference seems to be this, that the former are only modestly propos'd, whereas *Theories* are usher'd in with greater assurance. It is well if *Theories* be not as much out of fashion in the next Age, as *Hypotheses* are in this; for so many Observations and Experiments are requir'd to raise a Theory, that I despair of ever seeing a good One.

When I speak of Observations and Experiments, I would not be thought to under-vale a Society, which has been erected to that purpose, and whose endeavours have been so successful that way already: But however successful they may have been, those excellent Persons have more modesty, than to over-rate their own performances, and nothing has done them more injury, than the vanity of some few men, who have been so *Planet-struck*, as to dream of the possibility of a Noyage to the Moon, and to talk of making wings to fly

fly thither, as they would of buying a pair of Boots to take a journey (2). The Genuine Members of that Society have other thoughts of things, being far from any hopes of mastering Nature, or of ever making such progress, as not to leave work enough, for other men to do. One of their number, a great glory of their Society, after he had grown old in these Studies, learnt Modesty and diffiding thereby, and was never more reserv'd, than in his full growth and maturity of Knowledge, when he had least reason to be so. And another Incomperable Person, who has added Mathematic skill to his Observation upon Nature; after the nicest Enquiry, seems to resolve all into *Attraction*, which, tho it may be true and pious withall, perhaps will not be thought so Philosophical.

The truth of it is we may as well rest there, for after all, Gravitation was never yet solv'd, and possibly, never may, and after men have spent a thousand years longer in these Enquiries, they may perhaps sit down at last under *Attraction*, or may be content to resolve all into the Power or Providence of God. And might not that be done as well now? We know little of the causes

causes of things, but may see wisdom enough in every thing; and could we be content to spend as much time in contemplating the wise ends of Providence, as we do in searching into Causes, it would certainly make us better men, and I am apt to think, no worse Philosophers. For tho Final Causes have been so much banish'd from our modren Physics, yet nothing is more to the purpose, or more easie to be understood. Whereas Causes are yet Latent; and it is very remarkable, that the very last Author, (b) that has given us a System of Physics, after all the Discoveries that have been talk'd of, and Improvements that have been made in Nature, has been forc'd to proceed in an *Analytical* method, for want of Principles to go upon, and instead of demonstrating Effects from the Causes, has been forc'd to trace the Causes of things from their Effects: which tho it be some Argument of the Author's Modesty, yet I do not speak it to commend his performances, for his Physics are like his other Works, faulty enough.

(b) M. le  
Gler.

CHAP V.

Of Astronomy.

THE *Chaldeans* were the first, (unless you will except the *Chinese*) that we meet with in Prophane Story (*i*), that made Observations upon the Stars: Two reasons might incline them to this, First, the evenness of their Country, which afforded a free and open prospect; and next the opinion they had of the Stars, whom esteeming as Gods, it must have been a part of their Religion to look up to Heaven and observe them. But then their Observations were principally Astrological, they did not so much measure the Heavens, as fetch their directions from thence, and were more concern'd for the influences of the Stars, than their Motions: So that tho' Astrology were at its full Height amongst the *Chaldeans*, yet Astronomy never seems to have arriv'd at any maturity. The same may be said of most of the

Eastern People ; even the *Chinese*, after they have made Observations upon the Stars above four Thousand years, yet have made so little progress in Astronomy, that upon the arrival of the *Missionaries*, their Mathematicians could not compose a perfect Calendar (k).

(k) Le  
Compt.  
nouv. Me-  
moir. Let.  
3. p. 100.

The two *Hypothesis* of *Ptolemy* and *Copernicus* will take in most of what needs be said on this Subject ; for as to that of *Tycho Brahe*, as it is in a great measure compounded of these two, and seems design'd to account for difficulties, in both these Hypotheses, so it is lyable to several Objections in them both.

The *Ptolemaic* Hypothesis has too much appearance of Art, to be esteemed natural, all its *Epicycles* and *Eccentrics* and other *Ambages* can never be thought the Contrivance of Nature, which acts in a more simple manner, without going so far about ; those solid Spheres which it supposes have been shatter'd and overturn'd by the Modren Philosophers, and shown to be inconsistent both with the *Trajection* of Comets, and with that equal light, which is convey'd to us from the Planets and other Stars, which by passing through such different *Mediums* and Solid Bodies

mult

must have suffer'd innumerable Refractions: Several of the Phænomena of the Heavens admit of no tolerable solution this way, particularly those of *Mercury* and *Venus*. and the Access and Recess of the Polar Star to and from the Pole, which in the time of *Hipparchus* was distant from it 12 Degrees, but is not now fully three, and in process of time will recede from it again more than ever; and the many different and likewise opposite motions of the Stars and Sphæres are not easily conceiv'd. But nothing is so inconceivable as the velocity of their motion, for upon this Hypothesis they must be suppos'd to move some thousand Miles in a Minute, which tho it may be conceiv'd by Philosophers, is not very obvious to common understandings. Such are the Objections that have been commonly brought against this Hypothesis, which have rendred it so hard of digestion, and tho nothing can excuse the hard saying of that Profane King (*1*) so well known and so often quoted, yet it may be so far mollifi'd, that having been level'd against this *Hypothesis*, he did not thereby pretend to correct the Works of God Almighty, only did not believe them to have been fram'd

(1) *Alphonsus of Castile.*

fram'd in such a manner by God, as *Ptolemy* has describ'd.

The *Copernican Hypothesis* values it self upon its easiness, and the great Compendiousness of the way it goes in: But tho it accounts for appearances more Compendiously than the other does, and without that vast *Apparatus*, that is requir'd in the *Ptolemaic Hypothesis*, yet it contains things as incomprehensible as the other does: For as the celerity of Motion in the former exceeds all belief, so the Regularity of Motion is unfathomable in this. The Motion of the Earth is of hard enough digestion in it self, but supposing it to move in a fluid *Medium*, who is there that can imagine, that it should be so regular and uniform as it is? The fluid with which it is environ'd and in which it moves, is unstable and mutable, consisting of little Bodies, that are always altering their position to one another, and changing their shapes by constant and mutual Attrition, and yet tho the Ambient Fluid be always altering, the motion is the same. It describes our days by its Diurnal Motion upon its own Axis, our years by its Annual Revolution, and our Seasons by that and its Inclination, and all these



these so regularly, as not to vary in so many Successions of Ages, and yet we must believe that this Constancy and Regularity is maintained by fluctuating matter, the most unstable thing in the world. The exactest Movements or Machines, that humane wit can frame, are Subject to innumerable disorders, either from the breaking of the Spring of their Motion, or wearing of their wheels, or some other external impulse or inward decay, and therefore always want our care, either to set them right, or keep them in order; only this vast Machine and Frame of things, preserves its Course, and never varies, tho' acted in appearance by the most unconstant Causes. A man that well considers this, will be inclin'd to entertain a more favourable opinion of the Ancient Philosophers, and tho' he cannot believe the Heavens to be turn'd and acted by *Intelligences*, yet he will find it almost as hard to apprehend, how they move without them: whatever become of *Intelligences*, an Intelligent Being must of necessity be taken in, without which our Philosophy will be very unable to do the business.

There;

There is another difficulty in this Hypothesis, which the *Copernicans* cannot easily get over, and which will perplex any man's understanding that well considers it: That the Earth is only a point in respect to the Universe, tho' it be a pretty large *Postulatum*, yet possibly must be granted upon any Hypothesis; but that not only the Earth, but the whole *Magnus Orbis*, or that vast Orbit which the Earth describes round the Sun should be esteem'd a point, (without which supposition the *Copernican* Hypothesis cannot be maintain'd) is such a *Postulatum* in Astronomy, as the more a man thinks of, the less easily he can assent to. For what is this *Magnus Orbis* or vast Circle which must be esteem'd as a point? To take only the Semidiameter of this Circle, or about the sixth part of the whole, *Hugenius* (m) no incompetent Judge of these matters has calculated the distance betwixt the Earth and the Sun to be about 17 Million German Miles; or in other words, that supposing a Bullet shot from a Gun could retain always the same velocity, it had at its first discharge, with this swiftness in about twenty five years, it would pass from the Earth to the Sun: All which immense distance is about a sixth part

(m) *Cosmo-  
theor.* p.  
124.

part of *Copernicus's* point. It is true *Hu-*  
*genius* assigns a proportionable distance  
(if there can be any proportion in such  
an immensity) to the fix'd Stars; for  
this Bullet being shot again, with the  
same swiftness, he (*n*) supposes, it might  
come at the nearest of the fixt Stars in <sup>(n) *ib. p.*</sup> 137.  
about 700 years, which is such a dis-  
tance as common apprehensions cannot  
reach, and will once more require a  
Philosophers Understanding.

In this vast compass, our Astrono-  
mers have discover'd new worlds (like  
that Sanguine Conqueror who was seek-  
ing out New Worlds before the old one  
was half subdu'd) every Planet must  
be a World and every Star must have its  
Planets: This Project was pursu'd by  
*M. Fontanelle* in a pleasing entertaining  
way, but has been embrac'd by others  
with greater seriousness. What these  
Worlds are, might as well be left un-  
determin'd, God having thought fit to  
say little of them, and having plac'd  
them beyond our reach; But if we may  
guess at the discoveries that are to be  
made in the remotest Stars, from those  
that have been made already in the near-  
est, the Moon, I do not think they will  
make any great addition to knowledge.  
It must be confess'd, that mighty disco-  
veries

(o) *Selenograph.* p.  
126.

(p) *Almagest.* p.  
104.

varies have been talkt of in that Planet; *Hevelius* has given us its Geography, and has markt out (o) every Mountain and Vally, Sea and River, as exactly as if he had been there, in his accurate Map of that World. *Ricciolus* (p) has gone a little farther, and has assign'd every Astronomer his proportion of ground; you may there meet with the Land of *Copernicus*, *Galilaus* and *Kepler*; and it is but just that they should have the benefit of their Invention: And the same Author to show his modesty has plac'd *Ricciolus* in the best and most Conspicuous spot of Ground in that World. But are these men in earnest? Or do we yet know where we are? That the Moon is an Opake Body is no new discovery, the nature of Eclipses has long since shewn it, and I am affraid it is little we yet know beyond this. For tho the Moon has been divided into Sea and Land, and the Division so much acknowledged, that a man's parts must have been suspected, that would have doubted of the thing; and tho the obscure parts of its Body, have been generally thought to be Watry, and the Luminous parts, Earthy and Solid, yet this Division seems rather to be grounded upon an inference of Reason,

to wit, that the obscure and watery parts imbibe the Light, whereas the Earthy Solid parts reflect it, than upon the experience of Sense, assisted by Glasses. These Glasses indeed discover the difference betwixt the dark and Luminous parts much more clearly, than the naked eye can, but will never show the nature of either, or what Substance they are of, much less distinguish the different portions of Earth and Water: But men come possess'd with an opinion of Seas and Rivers, and than easily think they see them (as every sound does answer the tune that runs in our ears) and after one man has seen them, it is a reproach to the next, not to be as accurate and distinguishing as he, and so we cheat one another into a tolerable agreement. That this is the Case I am verily perswaded, for tho I can neither pretend to good eyes, nor good Glasses, and therefore will lay no weight upon my own opinion, yet *Hugenius* who had them in perfection, and who writ since these accurate Maps were taken, could neither observe Seas nor Rivers in the Moon, and expressly denys, that any such are to be seen there (q). And there is <sup>(q) Cosmo-</sup> this reason besides, that if any such were, <sup>theor. p.</sup> they must necessarily raise a mighty At-<sup>114</sup>  
mosphere,

*mosphere*, which, as it would hinder our clear prospect at all times, so by its clouds, it would sometimes darken one part of the Moons Body, and sometimes another; whereas now the dark and Luminous parts are always the same: So that as far as I can see, we know little more of the Moon, than that it is an Opaque and solid Body, and so much we were pretty well assur'd of, before *Telescopes* came in fashion.

No doubt, *Telescopes* are a noble Invention, and the discoveries that have been made by them are very considerable, but as to the discovering thereby the Nature and Substance of Heavenly Bodies, I look upon it as utterly impossible: And yet this is the modish way of framing new Worlds; we first observe Seas and Rivers, in the Moon, and if such be there, there must be Plants that they water, and if Plants, there must be likewise Animals to feed upon them, and all these are design'd for the service of men. The Reason is easily carry'd further, for if the Moon be a World, by parity of Reason, so must the other Planets be also, and if all the visible Planets are carried about in the Vortex of the Sun, which is no better than the other Stars, no doubt, the other fix'd Stars, have their  
their

their attending Planets, as well as the Sun, and so we have a Plurality of Worlds with a witness: But this chain of reasoning is easily broken, by breaking its first Link, for if there be no Waters in the Moon, in consequence of that, neither are there any Plants, or Animals, or Men, and if none of these be there, by parity of reason, neither are there any in the other Planets, and so the whole Chain falls to pieces.

These World-mongers are always objecting the improbability of God's framing so many vast and glorious Bodies, only for the sake of this Earth, so inconsiderable a portion of the whole: Amongst the rest *Hugenius*, who in one place makes this Objection, in another part of his Book, (r) as if he had forgot him- (r) P. 33. self, thinks it enough to say, That God rais'd this mighty Frame of things, that he might contemplate and delight himself thereby; and were there no other reason, we ought to acquiesce in this: But they that argue thus, seem to measure things by their Bulk, which is a false way of reasoning; there is more Beauty and Contrivance in the Structure of a humane Body, than there is in the Glorious Body of the Sun, and more perfection in one Rational immaterial Soul,

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than

than in the whole Mass of Matter, be it never so bulky. There cannot then be any absurdity in saying, that all things were created for the sake of this inferior World, and the Inhabitants thereof, and they that have such mean thoughts of it, seem not to have consider'd, who it was that died to redeem it. Let them measure the World by that Standard, and they cannot undervalue it any longer, without some reproach to infinite Wisdom.

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C H A P. IX.

Of Metaphysics.

**M**etaphysics having so great an affinity with Logic, and being so interwoven with the Learning of the Scholes, I need say less of them in this place: They are itil'd by *Aristotle* Natural Theology, from whence we may be enabled to take some measures of them; for Natural Theology is in it self a poor, weak thing. and Reason unassisted has not been able to carry the clearest Philosophers very far, in their pursuit after Divine Matters. We have seen this already in practical Truths, and the Reason lies stronger, in such as are Speculative. And if we see so dimly in physical matters, which are nearer our Sense, and in a manner expos'd to view, how much more must we be bewildred in our search after Spiritual abstracted Truths, in the consideration of universals and of things of a Transcendental Nature, such as fall properly under the consideration of Metaphysics? For tho metaphysical Truths may be certain enough in their own nature, yet they are not usually so to us, but being ab-

struse things, and laying deep and remote from Sense, it is not every one that is capable of understanding them, and there are yet fewer that understand their true use. They are usually under the Conduct of subtle Men, and these nice Professors, instead of resolving doubts, have spun out new difficulties, and fram'd Labyrinths, out of which they have scarce been able to disentangle themselves: So that Metaphysics, which were at first only Natural Theology, are now become the most artificial thing in the World.

One need only dip into any Systeme, to see how these men are plung'd in setting out, for whereas there are two things of principal consideration in Metaphysical Knowledge, its *Object* and *Affections*; and whereas Philosophers are pretty well agreed about the Object of other Sciences, as that Quantity is the Object of Mathematics; and matter, of Physics, and so of the rest; the Metaphysicians have not come to any tolerable agreement about the Object of this Science, or *Sapience*, or whatever you will call it: *Suarez* produceth six different opinions, and himself brings the seventh, which is his own. And as to its Affections, they are again at a plunge  
to

to find out Affections different from *Being* (which seems to comprehend every thing) for if the *Affections* and *Subject* are the same, their Demonstrations are Identical, and prove nothing. But these are dry Considerations.

What *Aristotle* has done upon this Subject, is much short of a perfect Work, and is rather an Essay, than a Compleat Treatise, for tho he has left fourteen Books upon the Subject, yet they are loose and indigested, (which was not usual with *Aristotle*, where he has given his last hand) and the two last are so foreign to his design, and so unsuitable to the place they stand in, that some have thought fit, either to strike them out of his Works, or to place them in a new order: And indeed his twelfth Book should seem to be his last, which concludes with his Notion of God and Spiritual Beings; tho none of his Books are Divine enough, to give a true account of Natural Theology. It is plain he wants light in these matters, and neither knows where to fix, nor what to determine; which is one reason of the obscurity of his Books of *Metaphysics*, for no Man can write clearer than he thinks. And therefore his Commentators have often tug'd in vain,

in labouring to make out a meaning, where possibly the Author himself was at a loss. If any Man could have understood him, *Avicen* had the best plea, who was as subtle a Philosopher and study'd him as much as perhaps any Man ever did; and yet after he had read his *Metaphysics* forty times over, and had them all by heart (which I will venture to say is more than ever any Man will do again) he was forc'd to lay them aside as unintelligible (S). In one thing I must do him right, that whereas he has been represented as too positive and Dogmatical in his opinions, it is the fault of his Followers, not his: He begins these Books in a very different manner: His third-Book (for the two first are chiefly Prefatory) is taken up with doubts, and the Title of the first Chapter is, *The use of Doubting*, to do which well, he makes one mark of a Philosopher; and gives this reason, because unless a Man knows how to find out and state a difficulty, it is impossible to solve it, as a Man must see the folds and windings of a knot, before he can untie it. So that the Art of doubting is no new invention, having been known to *Aristotle*, as well as the Moderns, with this difference only, that he

he does it more modestly, and is not so Sceptical, as the first mighty pretender to this way.

And because we are come thus far, let us consider this new method of knowledge by doubting, upon which our Modern Metaphysics turn so much, and of which our new Philosophers talk so loudly: For my part I can see no great use either of their doubting, or of the knowledge, it leads to. For what is it we must doubt of? Even of the most certain Truths in Nature, of the verity of our own Bodies, as whether we have Hands, Arms and Legs (*&c.* And what is the first knowledge that results from this doubting? That since I doubt, I am; for that which doubts must it self necessarily have a *Being*. Now allowing all this, I do not think we are much the wiser, for had ever any Man real doubts of these matters? Or did ever any Man in his Wits question the truth of his own *Being*? Such doubts and such proofs are only fitted for melancholy Persons, and I hope we are not Philosophizing at this time a day, to yeild conviction to such Men. Evident Truths and first Principles may be reasonably suppos'd, and indeed they must be suppos'd, for they are not capable of

proof, there being nothing clearer by which they may be prov'd; and for Men to offer at proof in such matters may make a pompous show, but is no real advancement of knowledge. The old way of proceeding upon allowed Principles seems to me more rational, than this method of questioning every thing, till we have unsetled the first grounds and foundations of Truth; and however useful doubting may be in Philosophical Enquiries, it ought always to suppose a ground, for a groundless doubt is so far irrational.

(u) Medi-  
cat. 5.

After our Philosopher has done with doubting, and has prov'd to us our own Existence, he brings us at last to the Being of a God, (u) in which a great part of his Metaphysics is spent; and I am so unwilling to weaken any proof to that purpose, that I shall pass it over: Only thus much may be inoffensively said, that his proof from the *Idea*, is the abstrusest and the least conclusive argument that has been brought; for the constant and universal agreement in the Notion of a God, may be a good Argument to prove his Existence, and familiar enough to the weakest Capacities, yet this *Idea* as managed by our Author, is neither clear nor very conclusive: For  
what

what is there of either, in the Objective Perfection or Reality of this *Idea*, being greater than the formal Perfection or Reality in the Mind, and therefore that this *Idea* cannot proceed from thence, but must have some Superior Cause to produce it? When after all this Objective Reality is nothing more than an operation of the Mind, or rather a mode of its operation, which is such a Reality, as one would imagine, the Mind alone might be able to give it.

But this Philosophers Metaphysics are only Meditations, a Compleate Treatise was to be given us by his Followers; amongst whom *M. Poiret*, I know not how has obtain'd a name; he has refin'd upon his Master, and is so full of thinking, that he has made Cogitation to be the substance of the Mind (x), and in pursuance of this, the Essence of God to be likewise Cogitation; which, with other odd opinions, will hardly recommend him to considering men. I always lookt upon *M. Poiret* as a *Phanatic* in Philosophy, and have been confirm'd in my Opinion, by what has happen'd since; for as Phanaticism has no bounds, he has since (if he be the same Man) express'd it in his Divinity, by

licking

(x) *Cogitation*  
*est. Rat.*  
*h. 2. c. 3. 5.*

licking up the vomit, and adoring the Opinions of a silly Woman, of *whose Inspiration he is as well assur'd as of the Being of a God* (y); an expression which nothing but Enthusiasm, can excuse from Blasphemy. And therefore I have the more wondred to see a comparison form'd betwixt *Plato* and *M. Pouret*, which I could have wish'd had been let alone.

(y) *V. Bout.*  
*Don. Nav.*  
p. 10.

I must rank *Mallebranch* in the same order, whose *Recherche* has furnish'd out such refin'd and abstracted Metaphysics, as if they were design'd for *Comprehensors*; he has exalted *Ideas* to their utmost Height, and because they bore not with them certainty enough, whilst they were barely operations of the mind, or representations from external Objects, he has plac'd them in a Subject that cannot err, to wit, in the Wisdom of God himself, whom having suppos'd to be the Place of Spirits, as Space is of Bodies, and that there is an intimate Union betwixt God and the Soul of Man, by attending to him, who is always presential to our minds, we are to see all things in this *Ideal* or Intelligible world (z). Now tho there can be no doubt, but God can lead us into all Truth, by displaying himself to us,  
and

(z) *Reck.*  
*l. 3. Par.*  
2. c. 6.



and perhaps may deal thus with us when we are in Heaven, yet this way seems too Supernatural whilst on Earth, and too clear for frail and weak Men, who are not yet to know by Vision; and it is withal so like the inward Light of a New Sect of Men, as not to make it over reputable: To which purpose it is very remarkable, that *Mallebranch's* Opinion, having been espous'd of late, by an Ingenious Person of our own, with all the advantages of Beauty of Style and Perspicuity of Expression, yet the Men of New Light have taken such hold of it, as to make it necessary for him to write an Apology to disengage himself from the *Quakers*, who would needs have it thought they had gain'd a Proselyte (a): Wherein tho he has distinguish'd himself from these People, yet thus much he owns, *That if the Quakers understood their own Notion, and knew how to explain it, and into what Principles to resolve it, it would not very much differ from his.* In another thing there is too great an agreement; that these Men of thought have too low a value for humane Learning, either as it lies in our common Books or in the Book of Nature, in respect of that light which displays it self from the *Ideal World*, by at-

(a) 2<sup>d</sup> Cor. 2.  
Hunt. 11.  
p. 19.

attending to which, with pure and De-  
fæcate Minds, they suppose Knowledge  
to be most easily had. Experience and  
Deductions have been formerly esteemed  
useful, but in this compendious way to  
knowledge, provided we make our ap-  
proaches, with our Souls purg'd and  
with due preparation of Mind, there  
needs little more than application and  
attention. Indeed Prayer has been made  
another Condition, which tho it be pro-  
per and of good use upon all occasions,  
yet is not so pertinent here, where we  
speak only of natural means.

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CHAP.

C H A P. X.

*Of History.*

I Scarce ever met with any Historian, who does not write true History, if you will take an account of him from his Preface, and not be too nice in examining his Book; the first pages are usually fill'd with the Care and Integrity of the Author, which possibly, are to be found no where else: Those who have taken most care, have been charg'd with some negligence, and all of them have been so far faulty, as to extort a Confession from one of their number, wherein he fairly owns, That there is none of the Historians, that do not lye in some things (b). He names some of the most unexceptionable, and pretends to be able to make good his charge by uncontestable proofs. Let us take a short view.

(b) *Vopisc.*  
*juxta*  
*init. —*  
*Neminem*  
*Scriptorem*  
*quodnam*  
*ad Histori-*  
*am perti-*  
*net, non*  
*aliquid esse*  
*mentis.*

We

We have little considerable remaining of Profane Antient Story, except what we have left us, by the *Greeks* and *Romans*; for as to the *Chaldean* History of *Berosus*, and the *Agyptian* of *Manetho* they both writ since *Heredotus*, and we have only some Fragments of them left preserv'd by *Josephus*, *Eusebius*, &c. and the Books that go under these great names, are the impudent Forgeries of *Annius* of *Viterbo*. And as to *Sanhoniathon*, who has given us the *Phœnician* History, tho he pretends to be much more Ancient, yet his great Antiquity has been question'd by *Scaliger*, and his very Being, by *Mr. Dodwell*. So that those we are to depend on are the *Greeks* and *Romans*.

The *Greeks* as they have not been noted for their veracity in any respect, so their Truth and Integrity in this particular has been always so questionable, That *Græcia Mendax* has been stigmatiz'd in History: We have no tolerable account from them before the Olympiads, the times before these were the Mythic Ages, and are all Fable; and when the Historical age commenceth, our Accounts of things are not much better: For they having not originally had any Public Annals, or Registers of things, and amongst their

their Ancient Authors, the Poets having had the first rank ; we may easily imagine what sort of Accounts are to be expected from those men, who were either to follow uncertain Reports and Traditions, or what is much worse, to Copy the Poets. Accordingly their first Accounts were very loose, and rather Poems than Histories, which they have been charged with by the *Romans* pretty freely, and *Quintilian* is so far from softning the matter ; That he compares the liberty they took to a Poetic Licence (c). But no Man has expos'd them so much as *Josephus* (d) has done. He tells them, *Their accounts of things are all novel, they have no Public and Authentic Annals, nor any Author more Ancient than Homer, and those do differ from one another, that Hellanicus, differs from Acusilaus, that Acusilaus corrects Hesiod ; and Hellanicus, Ephorus ; he again is corrected by Timæus, as Timæus is by others ; and Herodotus, by all : And yet this is that Herodotus, who has been styl'd the Father of History, tho he might with equal right be nam'd the Parent of Fable. I know what Apologies have been made for him, especially from late Voyages and Discoveries : But it is enough to say, he cannot be defended, and that those*

few

(c) *Instit.*

*l. 2. c. 4.*

(d) *Contr.*

*Appon.*

*l. 1.*

few Instances, which have been brought; do rather show the Wit of his Apologists, than signify much towards the redeeming the Credit of their Author; his mistakes are too numerous and too gross to to be accounted for, from some accidental agreement with Modern Discoveries.

It must be confest, some of the following Historians, have writ more cautiously, and in this the Children have exceeded their Father, particularly *Thucydides* who has been noted for his Accuracy and Care; but not to insist upon *Josephus's* Authority, who has not exempted him from the common Censure, a great part of his History is taken up with large Speeches and Harangues, which had never any Existence, except in the imagination of his own Brain; and the rest of his Story is of too narrow extent, both as to times and place, to be of any considerable importance in the account of ancient times, of the darkness whereof he himself complains in the entrance of his Book. He who has done most and whose accounts are most extensive is *Diodorus Siculus*, taking his rise from the Original of things and describing the world in its full Latitude and extent; and let any one excuse him from  
Fable,

Fable, and the Cause is yielded. His first five Books are almost a continued Fable, describing more ages, than the World has had duration, and such Nations as have had no Being; *Lucian's* True History has scarce any thing more incredible, than what may be met with in that Author. The best thing that can be urg'd in his excuse is, that he owns and confesseth the Charge, that is brought against him, Entitling his first Books, *Mythic History*, which in plain English is Fabulous. But this argument has been largely prosecuted by a learned Pen (e).

(e) Orig.  
Sacr. cap.

Well but however fabulous the *Græ-*  
cians may have been, there may be more  
certainty in Roman Story: It is possi-  
ble there may, and yet not near so much,  
as might be desir'd. The most com-  
pleat and only General History we have  
among them, is *Livy*, whose Genius  
has been thought to equal the Majesty  
of the People he describes: To pass by  
his *Patavinity*, which has been understood  
by some, of Partiality to his Country, and  
his long Orations, that are purely fiction;  
and Monstrous Prodigies, which are such  
vanities as only serve to amuse the weak-  
er sort of People; his accounts of remote  
times are dim and blind, and for want

of sufficient vouchers, are justly questionable. He himself describes the first times, to the Foundation of *Rome*, as a Poetical Period, rather than grounded upon undoubted Monuments (*f*); and after the building of the City, he complains, that the use of Letters had been very rare, and consequently little could be consigned to writing, that therefore the memory of things was his best Guide, at least so far, as to the burning of *Rome*, when most of their public Monuments, did perish with their City (*g*): which could they have been preserv'd, yet they were so *jejune* and naked, that they could hardly furnish out materials for a tolerable History.

The first ground of the Roman Story is, the coming of *Aeneas* into *Italy*, with this *Livy* begins his Book, and ushers it in with tolerable assurance, and if any thing could be known among them, it must have been their own original, and yet this is so far from being allow'd, that *Strabo* (*h*) plainly shows, *Aeneas* never stir'd out of *Troy*; and if *Homer's* Authority be of any weight, it is plain, he did not only die there, but his Posterity were to reign there in succeeding Ages (*i*). And that he never set foot in *Italy*, has been made evident to demonstration,



in a late dissertation to that purpose (k). And yet notwithstanding what can be said against it, this was so receiv'd a Truth at *Rome*, that the ancient Families deriv'd from *Venus* and *Aneas*, and upon this reason, the People of *Troy* had Privileges and Immunities granted them by the Romans, especially by *J. Caesar* who deriv'd from them. But this was an effect of partiality to their Country and of vanity, in being thought descended from Gods and Heroes, where in with like reason, they have been since imitated by other Nations.

The truth of it is, this partiality to their Nation does show it self in all their Historians; they represent themselves not only as the most Valiant People, but likewise as the most Just and Faithfull in all their Wars and Alliances, and having had the advantage of writing their own Story, they must have been believ'd in all they say, had not there been some way left of discovering the contrary. Themselves discover the opinion their Enemies had of them; *Galgacus* our brave Countryman is introduc'd describing them as Pyrats and public Robbers, Men of insatiable Avarice and unbounded Ambition, and up-

(k) Socharti  
Epist. num.  
Aneas  
unquam  
fuerit in  
Italia.

on these motives, as disturbers of the Peace of Mankind : And tho no doubt that noble Speech of his in *Tacitus*, were made for him, yet the Historian had not observ'd a due Decorum, had he not made him speak the Sense, their Enemies had of the Roman People. And tho *Polybius* does sometimes censure the Roman Justice, yet he no where discovers so much truth, as by what he tells us, of *Fabius* and *Philinus* : It seems these two had writ the *Punic War*, the one a *Roman*, the other a *Carthaginian* ; the one blames the *Carthaginians* almost in every thing, and the other the *Romans* : It is possible they might both be blameable, but I know no reason, why we are not to give as much credit to the *Carthaginian*, as we are to the *Roman*. Had such Historians as *Philinus* been yet preserv'd, we might then have known all the *Roman's* faults, as we now read little, besides their Vertues ; tho we have the less need of them to this purpose, the Christian Apologist (1) having left such an account of their Justice and public Vertues, as is very inconsistent, with their own Histories. And indeed we have one sure way of detecting their insincerity, by comparing them with sacred Story ; what monstrous

C. 1. Min.  
 lxxv. v.  
 lxxv. lxxv.

trous absurdities have *Justin* and *Tacitus* related of the *Jews*, where they might have had opportunities of being better inform'd? and we are not to think, that they have been more inquisitive in knowing, or perhaps much more favourable in describing other Nations: So that upon the whole, the *Romans* in this matter have not much out-done their Neighbours.

I am not ignorant what mighty expectations were conceiv'd of one Man (a) (m) Cic. de Leg. l. 1. p. 1. I mean *Cicero*, and how forward Men have been in imagining, that nothing could have been wanting in this kind, had he under-taken the work, he once intended. For my part I scarce wish he had, and cannot but think, he would have been as partial, and under as powerful prejudices, as any of the rest. For how do you think he had cut out and contriv'd his Work? He had design'd a History from the foundation of *Rome*, to his time, and in order to that design'd to begin at his own *Consulate*, and write backward to *Romulus* (n): A very preposterous and unaccountable method, (n) v. Diog. Cass. l. v. adin. did not the reason appear; the Good Man was full of himself, and was impatient to come at his own praises; *Ciciline*, no doubt, was in his head, and

after he had press'd his Friends to write that War, and could not prevail with them to undertake it, he is resolv'd to do it himself; and whether in the conduct of the Work, *Cicero's* character would not have been too large, and *Catiline's* too foul, I leave to every Man to judge: Would not *Catiline* have been painted out in the same dress, as he now stands in the four Orations? And had our Orator's History come down as low as *Anthony*, should we not have had too much of the *Philippics*, to be reconcilable to Truth? *Cicero* requires so much of Oratory as an ingredient in an Historian (o), as to confirm the suspicion, beyond a doubt.

(o) De  
Orat. l. 2.  
juxt. init.

If I should descend to Modern times, I should have a large field before me, but the path is so trodden, that every Man's own reading will furnish him with observations: If there should be any Man, who has made none of this kind, he needs only peruse the *English* and *French* Historians, and by comparing them together, he will find matter of Diversion and Admiration at the same time. How differently do they describe the same action? How manifestly in favour of a Party? How often do the *French* glory in a Victory, which with  
the

the *English* is esteem'd an Overthrow ?  
 And again how do the *English* some-  
 time proclaim Victory, where their Ene-  
 mies think they have given them a De-  
 feat ? How do they both Triumph,  
 where perhaps neither of them have  
 reason to glory ? Or if the advantage be  
 too undeniably on our side to be con-  
 tested, as at *Agincourt* and *Cressy*, how  
 do our Enemies seek to lessen it ? How  
 do they palliate every thing, and charge  
 Heaven, or cross accidents, or mad  
 Despair, with the fortune of the Day ?  
 How do they turn every Stone, and la-  
 bour to have the success and honour  
 fall any where, rather than on the Eng-  
 lish ? Whereas on the other side, How do  
 the English arrogate all to themselves,  
 and their own Courage, and scarce allow  
 any share to Fortune or Despair, or  
 lucky accidents. You have *Fabius* and  
*Philinus*, only altering the Nation in the  
*French* and *English*. What a reproach  
 to Truth was it, That a *Duke of Orleans*,  
 one of the first Persons in *France*, should  
 be said to be openly executed for Trea-  
 son at *Paris* ; as was reported in twen-  
 ty Histories, whilst the Duke was liv-  
 ing, and could contradict the report,  
 who afterwards dy'd in peace, to the  
 shame

(p) V. Bodin. Math. Hist. cap. 4.

(q) Chai-  
cocond. l.  
1. p. 49.

shame and ignominy of all his Historians (p). Or who could imagine, that it should be thought an universal Custom amongst the *English*, that upon an invitation to a Friends House, the Person invited, should in compliment, lie with his Neighbour's Wife? And yet this, however barbarous it may seem, has been related, by an *European* Historian (q), a Christian, and one that liv'd almost to the last Century. Would not a Man have suspected, he had liv'd two thousand years ago, or in some remote corner of the world, where the *English* had been reckon'd amongst Barbarous People?

(r) V. T. Mart. Ang. Ocean. p. 4. C. C. Purch. l. 2. p. 24, 28, 91, 700.

These are Domestick Instances, if we look abroad; upon the discovery of the *West-Indies*, what strange Relations have we had from thence? we have been told there of a Nation of *Amazons*, of Giants of a prodigious Stature, the People of such monstrous Shape and truculent Aspect, as if they were of another Species; and as many *Canibals*, as might eat up an ordinary Country (r). Whereas upon further enquiry, we meet with no *Amazons*, unless long Hair and want of Beards will metamorphise Men into Women, and the People are much of the

the same size and shape with the rest of Mankind : But the *Spaniards* either saw them in a fright, or were under the vanity of reporting strange things, or being in love with the Gold of the Country ; they were to represent the People as Monsters, that they might have a fairer pretence to destroy them. And such Instances may serve to illustrate ancient History ; doubtless, *Herodotus* and *Diodorus* were impos'd upon by such false Relations, and had not the like opportunities with us, of correcting their mistakes.

I should be infinitely tedious, should I give a History of Incredible things, and therefore I only touch upon some few, and these too matters of Fact, which ought to be most certain : Whereas should we launch out into Mysteries of State and the Cabinets of Princes ; which are the most instructive part, and most properly the Business of an Historian, we should be still more in the dark. Matters of Fact are visible things, and fall under common observation, whereas politic reasons and considerations, are abstruse and hidden, and only penetrated into, by some few of clearer Capacity and deeper

deeper Reach: every ordinary Capacity can judge of time by the point or hand, but the spring and secret Motions are only observ'd by Men of skill. These Men in the State are the Ministers, tho the secret be often hid even from them, for the Reasons which Princes give, are often only pretended, and rather what they would have others think of them, than the true motives by which they are guided. Such things are out of my Road, and therefore I dismiss them.

I shall only observe further, that however vitious our Histories may be already, there has been one way taken to make them more corrupt, by *Secret Histories* and *Turkish Spies*, and other Books of the like nature, which by an appearance of Truth, and by mingling it with falshood, impose upon Men of easie belief, and are now grown so numerous, that it is matter of Discernment to distinguish betwixt Spurious and Genuine Pieces. To which I may add *Varillas* and *Maimburgh* and other *French* Authors, who write with so Romantic an Air, as if they design'd rather pleasant Books; than true History, and rather to entertain, than inform their Reader:



Reader : who give us paint instead of Dress, and make Heroes, if they cannot find them.

I have done with this Head and have kept close to one Condition of History, the consideration of its Truth ; for should I take in all the Conditions requir'd by *Vossius* and *Le Moyne*, we should either have very little History or none at all. The Jesuit *Le Moyne*, one of the last that has treated of this Subject, requires such Conditions, and lays down such Rules, as no Man can follow, and is so nice in his Examples, as to allow (f) only four Hi-  
(f) Hist. 1. ch. 2.  
 storians among the Romans and not so many among the *Greeks*, and all of them short of Perfection. And as to the *Modrens*, he is yet more scrupulous, in admitting them into account, only it had been strange, had he not found two or three of his own Order, *Massens*, *Strada*, and *Mariana*, whom he thinks fit to equal with *Tacitus* and *Livy*. He designs us a History himself, and to that end has chalk'd out such a method as he means to pursue ; but if we may judge of his veracity, by his perpetually running a Parallel betwixt History and Poem ; or of his  
 pre-

prejudices, by his partiality to his Order, he is not like to out do his Predecessors: And notwithstanding his great design, we may conclude this Chapter, as he does his Book, That a *Compleat History shall not appear, but in that year, that discovers the Perpetual Motion and the Philosopher's Stone.*

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## CHAP. XI.

### *Of Chronology.*

CHRONOLOGY and Geography have been lookt upon as the two eyes of History, if these shine dim, our History must be yet more obscure; without these it lies in confusion, is only a heap of indigested matter, flat and insipid, and will neither profit nor delight in reading. It is time and place that give Life as well as Beauty, and a naked relation of things, without Circumstance, is very uninteresting stuff: So that if these can be had, they will be an accession of Beauty, in want of these, there will be as great a blemish. And in what measure we have them, we must next enquire.

And here again I shall pass by the fabulous accounts of times, such as the *Chinese*, *Egyptian* and *Chaldean* may be justly thought to be; for tho' *J. Vossius* has attempted the *Chinese* Antiquity, and

and the *Aegyptian* Dynasties have been endeavour'd to be reconcil'd by our Learned Countryman Sir *John Marsbam*; yet there are so many things to be supposed in their Accounts, and so little possibility of proof at so immense a distance, that the Systems which they raise are perfectly precarious; and whatever the aim of those Authors was, I doubt neither of their Books have done Service to Religion. They seem to me like an Hypothesis in Philosophy, which being granted, our Philosophers will argue plausibly upon it, and make a shift to reconcile all difficulties, that shall be brought, though the ground they go upon be Fiction and Enchanted; so these men will shift off objections pretty plausibly, and lay things together in Specious order, tho the Foundation they build upon be laid in the Air.

'Tis true our Accounts of *Greece* are somewhat more clear and certain, but then they are such as are too recent; if you trace them up to their remote Antiquities, the *Gracians* are as obscure as the rest of the World: The *Athenians* the most known People of that Race, know nothing of their own Original; according to themselves they were *ἀνθρώποι*, and either sprung from the Earth or had

had no original at all. When their Historical Age takes place, yet their Periods of time are dark and confus'd, and their Chronology is not so ancient as their History. This has been observ'd by *Sr. John Marsham* (t) who shows that the Ancient Greeks were wholly unskilful in Chronology, especially in the Technical part of that Art. There was such diversity and inequality in their years and such variety in their Periods and Cycles, as did necessarily occasion a great confusion; and it was impossible they should make right Computations of times, where they had no sure Rule to go by: This they had not, and accordingly their year was so disorder'd, and their Recurrent Feasts thereby so unsetled, That *Aristophanes* (u) pleasantly tells us, that the God's themselves did not know them, and introduceth the God's complaining of the Moon, that by her uncertain notice, of these good Times, they were disappointed of their Entertainments, and often forc'd to return back hungry to Heaven. *Meton* was the first who adjust'd these differences, and reduc'd their Accounts to tolerable Regularity, by the Invention of that famous Period of nineteen years, for which he has deserv'd the honour

(t) Chron. Can. p. 14. 139.

(u) *Ap. Scit. Mura. Arund. p. 233.*

honour to be recorded in Letters of Gold : tho his Period was not so accurate, as not to be capable of amendment, and therefore was afterwards corrected by *Calippus* and *Hipparchus*. So very unsteddy have their computations been. The *Arcadians* may have been thought to have been before them in this; if you will take that account of their being before the Moon, assign'd by some; by understanding it of their having had a Course of Lunar years, before the *Greeks* had fix'd their Periods; unless *Scaliger's* reason will be thought more probable (x).

(x) *Proleg.*  
*ad Emend.*  
p. 3.

(y) *Comment.*  
*ad*  
*Fast.* p. 15.

Nor are the *Roman* Computations more Regular : It has been lookt upon as matter of wonder, That the *Romans* should differ so much in their first and great *Epocha*, the time of building their City; *Onuphrius* (y) reckons up seven different opinions, most of them maintained by considerable Authorities, and is not a little amaz'd at the disagreement. I should have wondred, if it had been otherwise, considering either the darkness of their Ancient History, or the irregularity and unequalness of their Computations. So little regard had they to order in time, upon the Foundation of their City, that their first years were neither regulated by the Course

Course of Sun or Moon: *Romulus* instituted such a year as might be expected from a Warlike Prince, and an Illiterate People, consisting of ten Months, beginning at *March*, and ending at *December* (2): And although this Year was soon discover'd to fall short of the Natural Year and Course of the Sun; yet it is probable, he had not Skill, or perhaps Concern enough to correct the Mistake; and the Intercalations that were made, were done in an unskillful, or negligent Manner: So that the Year of Confusion must have happen'd sooner than it did, had he not been succeeded by a Prince, who had more inclination for the Arts of Peace than War. *Numa* undertook the Calendar, where *Romulus* had left it, and tho' I do not think he had any assistance from *Pythagoras*, as some have imagin'd (3), (which I doubt will appear to be a Chronological Mistake) yet he reduced the Year to better order, than could be reasonably hop'd for, in so dim an Age, by adding the two Months, which had been wanting in *Romulus's* Account, and ordering such Intercalations to be made, as were necessary to set right the irregular Days. But whether it was that his Calendar was yet very imperfect, or that the High-Priests (with whom

(2) V. Euseb.  
J. l. Hist.  
de Cal.  
Rom. l. 1.  
C. 1.

(3) Blond.  
ib. cap. 2

whom the power of Intercalation was lodg'd) were wanting in their Duty, or whether somewhat of both concur'd to the miscarriage ; this is certain, that before *J. Caesar's* time, the course of the Year was so much disorder'd, that the Months had run back into one another, their Winter was run into Autumn, and their Summer into Spring ; and had not that wise Prince apply'd a Remedy ; their Winter might have run into Summer. These Inconveniences being observ'd by *Caesar*, put him upon a Reformation, which he attempted by his Pontifical Power, and the assistance of *Sofigenes*, a skilful Astronomer, and having run all the irregular Days into one Year, consisting of Fifteen Months according to *Suetonius*, or of 445 Days, as *Censorinus* will have it ; by one Year of *Confusion*, he brought their Calendar again to order, by such a Regulation, as is too well known, to need to be explain'd. However, his Computations (notwithstanding the Skill of the Undertaker) were not accurate enough, for in less than 1300 Years from the Council of *Nice*, to *Gregory XIII.*) the Calendar and the Heavens were found to be again at Discord, and to vary ten Days in the Course of the Sun, and about four Days



in the Course of the Moon, which brought things into such disorder, as to occasion another Year of *Confusion*, under that Pope, in the Year 1582.

And tho' this Pope's Reformation, has been thought so compleat, as to be styl'd a *Perpetual Calendar*, and Medals have been struck upon the occasion to perpetuate the Memory of the thing, yet he must be a bold Man that will undertake, it shall be perpetual, or will venture to maintain it to be so exact, as not to admit of improvement. This is well known, that it had not been long abroad, till it was censur'd, and its Failings discover'd, by *Scaliger* and *Calvisius*, and wanted an Apology from *Clavius*, who had been one of the Principal Persons employ'd in the Design; with so little success notwithstanding, that if we will believe *Scaliger* (b), it wants a second Apology: And unless the Motions of the Sun were perfectly regular and uniform even to Minutes and Scruples, (which according to the best Calculations they are not) it is scarce possible they should fall under an Invariable Rule. However this be, unless this Calendar were more generally receiv'd, than it has yet been, it is like to occasion further confusion: For whilst it reaches

(b) *Scaligeran*.  
P. 51.

little further, than to those Kingdoms, under the Obedience of the Pope, and the *Julian* Account obtains, in almost all the other *Christian* parts of *Europe*, we are cutting out Work for future Critics, who are like to find Employment enough some Hundred Years hence, in reconciling the Differences, which shall arise from the Old and New Style.

From this Historical Account of *Times*, I think we have a fair Specimen of the uncertainty of Chronology. Should we remove the Scene from *Times* to Men, they will further evince this truth: The two great Men in this sort of Learning, were *Scaliger* and *Petavius*, the former of these has taken prodigious pains upon the Subject; which appears in several of his Works, so more particularly, in his great Work of the *Emendation of Times*, of which he had so good an Opinion, and was so much Complemented by Learned Men, upon his Divine and Immortal Work, that a Man would have imagin'd the Difficulties in the Accounts of Time, had been pretty well clear'd, and little left to be done further. His *Divine Work* had not been long abroad in the World, e're it was taken notice of by *Petavius*, who had spent as much time in these Studies, as *Scaliger* had, and

is so far from allowing him those mighty Praises, that he shows, he had been almost under a continu'd mistake. A great part of *Petavius's Doctrine of Times*, is spent in confuting *Scaliger*, scarce a Chapter in his five first large Books, wherein *Scaliger* is not mention'd, and his many Errors and Hallucinations discover'd; in such manner, that his Work might as reasonably be entitl'd a Confutation of *Scaliger*, as a *Doctrine of Times*. He will scarce allow him to have done any thing well in Chronology, or to have made any considerable Discovery, unless it were in the *Julian Period*, and after he had granted him that Praise, as if he had done him too much Honor, he retracts that Commendation, and will not allow him to be the Inventor of that Period, but to have stole it from the *Greeks* (c). And if that Invention had been allow'd him (which our Learned Primate perhaps with more reason does attribute to a Countryman of our own a Bishop of *Hereford*) yet it being only a

(c) *Appre-*  
*fecto nec*  
*Scriptis ab*  
*eo Chrono-*  
*logica li-*  
*bris, nil*  
*fere est,*

quod momentum aliquod ad rem allum habeat; quodque reprehensionem effugiat, præter particulam istam, qua *Juliana Periodi methodum* explicavit — Quamquam in eo castigandus est non nihil *Scaliger*, quod se periodi illius inventorem, ac meritum fuisse gloriatur, hanc autem a *Græcis* transulit — *Doctr. Temp.* l. 9. c. 1.

Technical thing, and common measure for fixing and reducing other Periods unto, and it self no real Period in time; tho' it be of good use, as an Instrument to work with, yet it is no real discovery in the Accounts of time, which notwithstanding this, remain in the same obscurity, only they may be rang'd in better order, under this common Period, than they were in before. So that either *Scaliger* had discover'd nothing, at least nothing considerable, or he has been very unjustly censur'd by his Adversary *Petavius*. In many things, no doubt, they have been both of them mistaken; tho both of them pretend to demonstrate, and in many of their Calculations proceed with Mathematical assurance.

What has been done since, has been chiefly in the Historical part of Chronology, (the Controversie some Years ago, having run much in the Technical, the Reformation of the *Roman* Calendar, having probably turn'd Mens Disputes that way) wherein Father *Pagi* has excell'd, and from one accidental Observation (to say nothing of his other Discoveries) concerning the *Quinquennialia*, *Decennialia*, and other *Roman* Feasts, has given much Light to the *Roman* Fasti, and discover'd the Mistakes of *Scaliger*,  
*Petavius*,

*Petavius*, *Baronius*, and most of the Historians and Chronologers, who have Writ before his Time. How far his Observation will hold, Time must show; he seems to glory too much, where he compares it to the Discovery of the *West-Indies* by *Columbus* (d).

(d) *Pagi*  
*Dissert.*  
*Hypat. l. 5*

Our late Incomparable Bishop of *Chester*, as he begun to write about the same time with *Pagi*, so he has done it with like success, and from some dark Hints, and particularly from his Observations upon *Plotinus's* Life by *Porphyry*, has given much light to a very obscure part of History, in his *Cyprianic Annals*; tho' I cannot altogether have the same Opinion of his Posthumous Chronological Works: For behold the power of Prejudice even in good Men! The Bishop in this Work being to settle and adjust the Succession of the *Roman Bishops*; it happens that *Eutychius's* Annals were of good use to this purpose, and very agreeable to the Bishop's Opinion: Who this *Eutychius* was, is well known, one whom the Bishop in his Vindication of *Ignatius's* Epistles (e), had represented as too modern Authority to be much credited; living in the *Tenth Century*, and ignorant of the Affairs of his own Church, a trifling *Arabic* Historian, without Judgment, and contra-

(e) *Pagi*  
*Cap. 1.*

dicting himself: And yet this same *Eutychius*, when he favours the Bishop's Opinion, tho' he knew little of his own Church, is good Authority in the Affairs of the *Church of Rome*, where he had reason to be ignorant, (f) and the Bishop is so possess'd with him, that he forsakes our *Greek* and *Latin* Authors, to follow his Footsteps; altho' his Authority be really of no value, and he has had that right done him, to be contemn'd by most of those who have taken notice of him; except Mr. *Selden*, who to gratify his Anger against the Bishops, gave us a part of this Author, and encourag'd Dr. *Pocock* to publish the rest.

We have been promis'd great things of late from Medals and Inscriptions; *Ez. Spanheym* famous for his Book, *De usu Numismatum*, has largely shewn the Use of Medals (g) in Chronology, which *Du Fresne*, and *Foy-vallant* have since illustrated by Example; the one, in the *Constantinopolitan* Emperors; the other, in the History of the *Seleucidae* accommodated to Medals; and a third has gone so far, as from a few obscure Medals of *Herod's* Family, not only to call in question the Authority, but by broad conjectures, to suspect of Forgery, *Herod's*, and several others of our

our best Authors. But besides the danger from a dim Legend or Inscription, where the least stroke, will alter the Sense, or determine the Number very differently; whoever considers, That *Annus* of *Viterbo* could forge large Histories, will surely not think it strange, that we should have Forgeries in Medals. It is too certain, there have been such, and the thing is so noted, that some Medals are now as valuable, for being exact Counterfeits, as others are, for being truly Originals. And as to Inscriptions, who knows not, that it was generally the way of Flattery, to Complement Princes and Great Men of all sorts, with fulsome Elogies, and that *Domitian's* Medals and Inscriptions were call'd in after his Death, because he had not deserv'd such Honors? And tho' I do really think the present *French King* to be a Wise and Heroic Prince, yet I believe there are few, who would be willing to take his History, from *Meneſtrier's* *Lewis XIV. from Inscriptions and Medals.*

## C H A P. XII.

## Of Geography.

A Stranger to Geography, that should read the Voyages of *Ulysses* or *Aeneas*, as they are describ'd by the Poets, and should observe, the time that is spent, the Removes that they make, and dangers they undergo, in being toss'd from Shore to Shore, would be apt to imagine, they had visited most parts of the habitable World; and yet it is plain, one of them scarce went any further than the *Agean-Sea*, and neither of them ever past the Mouth of the Straits: It is much so, with our Ancient Geography, where we have a great noise, and little done. The Poets were wise in stoping short of the *Straits*, for had they launch'd out, and led their *Heroes* beyond these Bounds, they must have been in danger of being lost, all beyond having been, *Terra Incognita*. Nor can this seem strange in the Poets, the Ancient Historians and Geographers knew little farther; *Herodotus* (*h*) is lost when he passeth the Straits,

*Herod.*  
*l. 2. Strab.*  
*l. 5. 412.*



*Straits*, *Posidonius* and *Artemedorus* in *Strabo* \* make the Sun to set there, and *Aristotle's* Philosophy will carry him little further, who will needs have *India* to Confine upon the *Straits*, and *Herculus's* Pillars : And indeed it is so far true that the *Straits* and *India* did border upon one another, as *India* seems to have been a common name amongst the Ancients for Ignorance, for where they knew no farther they call'd it, *India* : which *Strabo* tells us (i) all the Geo- (i) lib. 2. graphers that have writ have given us nothing but lies. I will not enter upon a narrative of the mistakes of the Ancients, and show how they have confounded places nearer home, and jumbled Sea and Land together, how some of them have mis-taken the *Mediterranean*, and joyn'd it with the *Persian* Sea : How the Northern Seas have been made to run into the *Caspian*, That is really a Lake ; and the *Arabian*, has been made a Lake, that is well known to flow into the Ocean : He that has a curiosity may meet with a plentiful Harvest of such mistakes, in *Strabo's* three first Books.

*Strabo* indeed has corrected many of these mistakes, and has deliver'd things down to us with greater accuracy :  
But

But neither is he exact-enough; he is too much a Historian, to be a Good Geographer, and wanting Tables and Maps, and the Longitudes and Latitudes being things beyond his kill, without which, it is scarce possible to fix places a right, he must needs err for want of such Helps to guide his Course: And the same may be said of most of the rest of the Geographers, before or soon after his time.

The honour of reducing Geography to Art and System, was reserv'd to *Ptolemy*, who by adding Mathematical advantages, to the Historical Method in which it had been treated of before, has describ'd the World in a much more intelligible manner. He has delineated it, under more certain Rules, and by fixing the bounds of places from Longitude and Latitude, has both discover'd others mistakes and has left us a method of discovering his own. What these are I need not say, the most considerable may be seen in *Agathidamon's* Map of the World, which is printed with *Ptolemy's* Works, and is the first of its kind now extant. A man may see there with some pleasure, what Idea the Ancients had of the World, after it was thought, to have been pretty plainly discover'd  
by

by *Ptolemy's* labours: No very clear one you may be sure; amongst other mistakes, the situation of *Britain* is quite mistaken, *Scandinavia* a large *Peninsula*, is divided from the Continent, and contracted into a poor narrow Island; *Africa* is describ'd without bounds, and no passage allow'd from the *Mediterranean* to the *Red-Sea*, and it will not be wondred, if the description of *India* be remote from truth. Lesser errors abound in him; how many of this kind have been detected by a late skilful Geographer (i) only in one of our *European* Nations? And how many more might be shown in the rest? And if he could be so much deceiv'd, as he is, in the Description of *Cyprus*, an Island near *Alexandria*, and almost at his own door, it will not seem strange, that he should be more out in his accounts of *Scandinavia* and *Britain*. It is certainly no commendation, that the forecited Author, prefers *Pliny's* accounts to *Ptolemy's*, who has not been very reputable for his accuracy or truth, and that *Starbo* (in the historical part) is preferr'd to them

We

We have had a Geography of late deducing all things from the *Phenician* Antiquities, which has appear'd with pomp enough to dazzle men into an opinion thereof, and thereby to obtain Credit and Reputation in the World. The Author is a Considerable Person, and one who in order to establish his *Phenician* Antiquities, has successfully enough overturn'd those of the *Greeks*: But when he comes to establish these Antiquities, the first thing he complains of, is, want of Monuments (k), and therefore flies to the *Greeks* to fetch them thence; so that we are much in the same place, where we were. However what are these Monuments, which we meet with there? By his own Confession only some loose and broken Fragments, which seem to discover little more, than in general, that the *Phenicians* made long voyages, and visited remote Countries; and what is that to us, if they have left us no Charts or Journals, which they have not done? So that at last, he usually takes shelter in the derivation of a word, or place, from a *Phenician* Root, wherein, tho he has been happy enough in his conjectures, yet this way is principally conjectural, and too precarious to build a Geography upon. If this be all, I will under-

(k) *Præf.*  
*ad Chan.*

undertake *Goropius Becanus* will go near to do as much for the Dutch, *Pere Pezom* for the *Celtique*, and almost every Country, that pretends an Original Language, and has a fanciful man amongst them, will do the like for their own Nation. I am unwilling to oppose this Author, for the sake of his Title, which is *Geographia Sacra*, and shall readily grant, nay it is what I contend for, that as far as it is Sacred, it is likewise true; but where he leaves *Moses*, he forsakes his Guide, and wanders as much as the *Phenicians* ever did.

I have no design to form a Comparison betwixt the Ancients and Moderns, they are both alike to me, but the advantage in this, is too visible on the side of the Moderns to be dissembled: They have open'd a passage to a New World, unknown to the Ancients, and those parts of the Old, which have been thought Unhabitable, have been found to be Inhabited; and their Torrid Zone to be Temperate enough, by refreshing Showers, and constant Brezes, and cold Nights, by the direct Setting of the Sun, and interposition of the whole Body of the Earth. *Antipodes*, who have been the Subject of so much Controversy, are to us Matter of Fact, and the Globe it self has

has been compass'd with less noise by *Magellan* and *Drake*, than the *Phenicians* and *Greeks* could Coast upon the Mediterranean. However, least we should swell too much upon our Discoveries, there is yet World enough left undetected to be a Check upon our Ambition.

(1) *Is*  
*Moshe 1<sup>o</sup>*  
*Vol. 1.*  
*1. 825.*

I am not of his Opinion (*D*), who thinks that almost one half of the Terrestrial Globe is yet undiscover'd, but by modest Computation, I suppose we may allot a fourth part. That there is a vast *Southern* Continent, as yet scarce lookt into, is now past Controversy; tho' I much doubt, whether the further Discovery would turn to great account; for the *Dutch* who pretend to have Sail'd to the 64th Degree of Southern Latitude, have observ'd Mountains cover'd with Snow; and no farther South than the utmost Bounds of *America*, the Straits of *Magellan* are so Froze in *April* (*m*), that there is then no passing that way for Ice: So that much of the Country must be cold and barren, answerable to our Northern Climes on this side. The Northern parts of *America* are yet undiscover'd, nor can it be determin'd, till its Bounds that way be laid open, whether it be a vast Island, or a Continent. *Africa*, tho' it has

(2) *Nar-*  
*Borough's*  
*1746.*  
*1. 10.*

has been compass'd round and round;  
 from the *Mediterranean* to the *Red Sea*,  
 yet little more than its Coasts are tho-  
 roughly known, except *Egypt* and *Abas-*  
*ia*, its In-land parts have been either not  
 sufficiently view'd, or imperfectly de-  
 scrib'd; neither the Merchants Gain, nor  
 the Missionariet's Zeal having determin'd  
 their Pursuits to such rude and desolate  
 Countries. And as to *Asia*, what a pro-  
 digious Compass are we forc'd to fetch  
 about, to come at the extreme Regions  
 of that Quarter of the World, most of  
 which might be sav'd, and a Voyage  
 made with half the Charge and Time;  
 could a Passage be discover'd by the  
 North, to *Tartary* and *China*: A Passage  
 which has been often attempted, but al-  
 ways with Disappointment, and some-  
 times with the loss of the Adventurers;  
 and is like to continue, a *ne plus ultra*, to  
 their most daring Endeavors: Whether  
 we consider the Dangers they are expos'd  
 to from rough Winds, in a Clime intens-  
 ly cold; or from Mountains of Ice, which  
 are the Rocks that are most fear'd in those  
 Seas; or the Difficulties in making their  
 way in thick Mists and Fogs; or what  
 may happen worse, in Nights of some  
 Months continuance, and no Moon ei-  
 ther to direct their Course, or give them

L.

Light:

(n) Le  
Compt.  
Memoir.  
Let. ult.

Light. To say nothing of a vast Ridge of Mountains, which has been observ'd by our late Missionaries (n) to stretch it self forth into the *Tartarian* Sea, the Cape whereof has never yet been doubled, and probably never may ; it being doubtful, whether these Mountains may not reach to the opposite Coast, and joyn *America* with the *Asian* Continent : So that the Bounds of *Asia* on that side, as well as the opposite *American* Coast have been hitherto hid from our Enquiries.

(o) Le  
Compt. ib.

(p) Var.  
Observat.  
P. 23, 34.  
ib. P. 168.

There is one thing yet very lame in our Geography, the fixing the true Longitude of places ; and tho' several new ways have been lately try'd, to redress this Inconvenience, both from exact *Pendulums*, and from Observations upon the Immersions and Emersions of *Jupiter's* *Satellites*, yet they have not altogether prov'd effectual. For want of this, *China* has been plac'd in our Maps five or six hundred *French* Leagues further distant, than it really is (o), and an imaginary Country found out, to fill up the vast intermediate space : And *Vossius*, who delights in Paradoxes, (who has magnify'd Old *Rome* to above Seventy Miles in compass, and its Inhabitants to fourteen Millions of People (p) has remov'd it yet farther off. And tho' the

Jesuits



Jesuits of the Mission, have pretended to rectify this Mistake, from the Mathematical Observations above-nam'd, yet neither could *Vossius* see into the strength of such Arguments, and I much question, whether they would have obtain'd Credit, had not a Missionary of the same Order (q) determin'd the Matter in a more undeniable way, by opening a Passage from *Muscovy* to *China*, and by marking the several Stages, and showing, from undoubted Relations, it was only a Journey of so many Days. And yet the difficulty is greater at Sea, which is not capable of being so easily measur'd, and where the Observations in our *Telescopes* cannot be so regularly made, as they may upon firm Ground, and there it is, the Jesuits themselves complain, they are at a loss.

*Vossius* has assign'd such a reason (r) of the variety in fixing the Longitude of the Eastern part of the World, as may be extended further, and be of excellent use in Speculations of this Nature. Upon the discovery of the *West-Indies* by the *Spaniards*, and a Passage open'd by Sea near the same time, to the East, by the *Portuguese*; *Alexander VI.* by the Power which Popes have of disposing of Temporal Kingdoms, did by solemn Bulls (s) dispose

dispose of this new World to these two Nations ; and having divided it into two Hemispheres, the Western Hemisphere he allotted to the *Spaniards*, and the Eastern to the *Portuguese* ; a Division which the *Dutch* and *English* have not thought themselves oblig'd to submit to. However the Division was made, but when the Parties came to claim their respective Shares, a Question presently arose about fixing their Longitude, and the Pope's having not been *then* Infallible in Matters of *Fact*, especially in such as depend upon Mathematical Calculations ; the two Nations were left to end the Controversy betwixt themselves. The great Contention was about the *Molucca-Islands*, which the *Spaniards* claim'd as theirs, and the *Portuguese* pretended, fell within their share in the Division, and Men of Skill being consulted on both sides ; the *Spanish* Geographers went one way, and the *Portuguese* went another, and so far were the two Nations from coming to agreement, that they differ'd almost forty Degrees in their Calculations, which is a large proportion of the whole Globe ; and yet so obstinate were both in their Accounts, that Orders were given by public Edicts, that the Degrees and Meridians should be no otherwise fixt

fixt in their several Charts and Maps, than as they had been determin'd by the two Nations. How much the one side was mistaken, has been since better known, the Conclusion was, that whilst the Longitude was determin'd, in such an unaccountable manner, by public Edicts, and absolute Power, it occasion'd strange confusion in our Degrees and Meridians, of which *Vossius* thinks, we have not recover'd since.

But granting the Globe to have been nicely measur'd, has it withal been as accurately describ'd? I doubt not, how are our modern Geographers perplext in making out the Situation of antient Places? *Babylon* once the most Glorious City upon Earth, is almost as much hid (t), as the obscurest Village ever was; nay, they often stumble, where they tread in known Paths. *Ferrarius* has given us a Geographical Dictionary pretending to be Universal, afterwards so much enlarg'd and corrected by *Baudrand*, as to seem a new Work; they were both of them Men noted for their skill in Geography: Notwithstanding which, their joynt Work had not appear'd above Twelve Months in the World, till Monsieur *Sanfon* had discover'd five hundred Faults (u) only under the first Letter

*A.* A Work of the like Nature has been since publish'd in *English* by two other extraordinary Persons, and tho' no *Sanfon* has yet made his Observations upon it, yet I will undertake with the little skill I have in Geography, to show greater Mistakes under the Letter *A*, than any that occur in *Ferrarius*, or *Baudrand*. To name only one, the *Azores* are there describ'd as the same with the *Canary Islands*; which is an Error of worse consequence, and more inexcusable, because the first Meridian is usually plac'd in these Islands: And yet they stand thus in the correct and enlarg'd Edition.

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## CHAP XIII.

### *Of Civil Law.*

**W**E have certainly one great Proof of the Excellency of the *Roman* Laws, from the consent of those many Nations, by whom they have been receiv'd ; and that too where there is no Living Authority to enforce them, and they come recommended only by their own native force: The *Romans* Laws have liv'd longer, and spread wider, than their Arms ever did, and the Conquests of their Wisdom have been greater than those of their power. However, there is only one perfect Law, a Character to which no Humane Ordinance can have any claim, and of which the *Roman* Laws will be found upon Examination to fall much short ; notwithstanding the Reputation of Wisdom that they stand possess'd of.

The Twelve Tables contain the first Grounds of the *Roman* Laws, and having been Abridgments of those of *Solon* at *Athens*, and those of the other Cities in *Greece* renown'd for Knowledge, added to the Ancient Customs of *Rome*; if there be any Wisdom in Humane Constitutions, it might be expected to be met with there. It was of these Tables, that *Cicero* pronounc'd under the Person of *Crassus* (x), that they were of more Use and Authority, than all the Books of the Philosophers. We have only some Fragments of them left collected by *Baldwin* and others; amongst which, as there are some things hard, so that Law which permits the Body of the Debtor to be cut in pieces, and divided amongst his Creditors, for want of Payment, is not only Cruel but Barbarous. *Baldwin* (y) himself cannot quote it without Exclamation; and *Quintilian* who could give a colour to most things, and as a *Roman* was concern'd to do it in this, yet where this Law comes in his way, rather seeks to excuse it (z), than offers at its defence. The best thing he says for it is, that it was then antiquitated, and as such we leave it with the rest of that Set, and pass on to those, that are now in force, the Imperial or *Justinian*-Laws,

(x) *De Crassus*  
*lib. 1. c. 1.*

(y) *Com. de Leg. 1. 2.*  
*Tab. c. 46.*

(z) *Ap. Bald.*  
*lib. 1.*

Laws, and will see what Exceptions can be made to those.

They are principally reducible to two Heads, the *Pandects* and the *Code*, whereof the first contains the Opinions of Learned Lawyers; the other, the Decrees of *Roman* Emperors. As to the Institutes, they usually go along with the *Pandects*, and are only a Compendium, or useful Introduction to young Beginners: and the Novels are a Supplement to the *Code*: The *Feuds* are not of *Roman* Original, but Customes of a later Date and meaner Extraction.

The Civilians who pretend that if the *Latin* Tongue were lost, it might be found in the Book of *Pandects*, would take it ill to be thought mistaken in the Word *Pandect*, which although a Masculine (*a*), is generally us'd by them in a Feminine Signification: This is a light Error, only it is in the Threshold, and they that speak big, should be very sure, they are not mistaken. It will not be deny'd, the greatest part of the *Pandects* are writ with purity enough, they have that from the Authors, and the Age they were writ in, and so much is own'd by those Critics, who have been pretty severe upon the other Tomes of the Law, and therefore I shall make no Objection here:

here: No more than I shall, that the Emperor by whose Order they were collected, is under no very advantagious Character for Learning, that which *Suidas* gives him being 'Ανάλφατος, a Man that did not understand his Alphabet: For tho he were ignorant himself, he might employ Men of Understanding, and if *Tribonian* were such, who was the great Instrument in that work, his Laws will have no less Authority upon that account: But so it happens, that *Tribonian's* Character is worse than the Emperor's, not for his Understanding but Integrity, being represented by the same Author (b) as a Corrupt Person, one that writ Laws and took them away, and prostituted Justice for the sake of Lucre, one that comply'd with his Prince's Passions and Humors, and flatter'd him almost to Adoration. I know *Suidas's* Authority is suspected, and therefore I should lay the less weight upon it, did not *Justinian* seem to countenance the Charge in his own Constitutions (c), where he assumes such Titles and Honors, as *Tribonian* is said to have given him. However I charge nothing upon

(b) *Suid.*  
*de Tribon.*

(c) *Con-*  
*stitut. de*  
*Cod. conf.*  
*et de Conc.*  
*Digest.*  
*ubi,*

Divina nostra, Numen nostrum, &c.

this



this Emperor, I only cite his Words, and leave others to judge of and reconcile them.

But whatever *Tribonian's* other qualifications were, I doubt we have too much to blame his want of care, and to suspect, the Conception of the *Pandects* as well as the other Tomes of the Law, was a hasty work, and not digested with that accuracy, which a work of that vast importance might justly require. For whereas in his time the Roman Laws had been growing up above a 1000 years, and had then swoln to that Bulk that they were contain'd in two thousand Volumes, so many, as could not easily be read in some years, much less compar'd and digested and reconciled; *Tribonian* with his few Assistants had overcome all these difficulties in a short time, and in three years had finish'd the *Digest* and *Institutes*, together with the first draught of the *Code*; which last in all probability, having been compos'd too hastily, was forc'd to undergo an Emendation and to come forth in a second Edition. And doubtless the Digest might likewise have been more correct, had it cost more Years, and had had *Tribonian's* second Care. The Emperor himself seem'd surpriz'd with the Dispatch,

(d) *Constitution. ib.*

(e) *Win-  
d. 1. Can.  
E. 1. 1. 1. 1.  
1. 1. 1. 1.  
1. 1. 1. 1.*

(f) *1. 1. 1. 1.  
1. 1. 1. 1.  
1. 1. 1. 1.*

patch, for as before it was undertaken, he styles it an Infinite Work, such as none of the former Emperors had ventured to undertake, or thought possible; so after it was finish'd within the Compass of three Years, he plainly owns (d), he did not imagine, it could have been effected in less than ten. Accordingly the marks of hast and precipitation have been observ'd in the Work: In some places too short and consequently obscure, in others redundant and the same things repeated, only in different words, or from different Authors; *Antinomians* are almost unavoidable in such variety of Opinions and Answers, and sometimes inextricable difficulties occur, by mangling the Sense and curtailing Authors: Some things in that or the Code seem not so consistent with the Canons (e); and other Cases yet harder have been cited (f) by a Learned Advocate. A great part of it is spent in Cases and subtle Opinions, possibly of greater Learning than real advantage in the common uses and occasions of Life; and all these are left us much indigested, in loose and broken Sentences, not in such method as is suitable to a Regular Body of Laws.

Laws. Most of which particulars have been taken notice of by *Budaus*, *Hottoman*, *Valla* and others.

Nor is the *Code* less lyable to Censure, for besides that it wants much of the purity and Learning, which appear in the *Pandects*; *Tribonian's* unskilfulness or insincerity do more visibly display themselves here. For whereas, almost all the Books of the Ancient Lawyers are now lost (the blame whereof, if some Men's suspicions may be credited, will fall heavy on the Emperor or *Tribonian*) from whose labours the *Pandects* were collected, and therefore we are less able to judge, of any unfair dealing, that has been shown there: Many of the Emperor's Constitutions do yet remain and have been preserv'd in the *Theodosian Code*, from all which it is easie to determine, what sort of treatment, the Imperial Constitutions have met with, in *Tribonian's* new Compilation. Some of the Constitutions have been alter'd without Judgment, and others in such a manner as betray no little ignorance in the Compiler; in some the words are struck out, that determine the Sense of the Law, and again words added that give it a new one; one Law is split into two, and sometimes two are

run into one ; the time and date are often mistaken , and sometime the Person ; the knowing of both which does afford great light to a Constitution : With other mistakes, which I should not have ventur'd to have put down, had they not been shown at large, in a Learned Preface and more Learned Prolegomena to the *Theodosian Code* : A Code of such use to this day, that there is no understanding *Justinian's* Law without it ; and formerly of such authority that for several hundred years after *Justinian's* time, it did obtain (g) in most of the Western parts of *Europe* when *Justinian's* Law was in a manner extinguish'd and forgot, and must utterly have perish'd, at least in the principal part of it, the Pandects, had it not been strangely preserv'd, in the single *Pisan* or *Florentine* Copy, from which all our other Copies (h) have been since taken ; and is now us'd as Law : So that by a strange Reverse of things, *Justinian's* Law which for so many Ages was lost or neglected, does now obtain, and the *Theodosian Code* is in a manner antiquitated : The *Theodosian Code* was the better Law, till the Reign of *Lotharius*, when *Justinian's* Law begun to revive ; and now, it seems, *Justinian's* Law

(g) Seld.  
Dij. 21  
Flet. 2. c.  
v. Pasq.  
Rech. l. 9.  
ch. 36.

(h) Ant.  
August.  
Emend. l.  
1. c. 1.

Law is better than that, and Time, or Chance, or Opinion shall determine their worth. It is plain *Justinian's* Law had not the same esteem at its birth, as it has since acquir'd by Age, since it could go into disuse so early after its conception, as to make it a question, whether it obtain'd its Course (i) in *Justinian's* own reign? Or if it obtain'd then, as doubtless it did, it kept its ground a short time till the Reigns of *Basilus* and *Leo*, when *Justinian's* Law was Abridg'd and Reform'd by those Emperors, as he had done by the Laws before his own time; and these Emperors Laws obtain'd in the East (under the Title of the *Basilic Constitutions*) till dissolution of that Empire, as the Theodosian Code had done in the West. So that if we might measure things by Success or Duration, *Justinian's* Laws have not yet been long liv'd, and what is more surprizing, it might perhaps be made a Question, in what Sense they live now? For if we will believe a noted Author, who had reason to understand their Authority and Extent (k) they have not now the force of Laws, either in *France*, *Spain* or *Holland*, (some of the most considerable Nations in *Europe*) but have only the force of good Reasons or Authority when

(i) *Epiph.*  
*Regeb. l. 9.*  
*c. 31.*

(k) *St. H.*  
*Tem. l. 1.*  
*l. 101.*

\* Seld.  
 Dis. ad  
 Flct. Cap.  
 6.

when alledg'd, but the Customs and Statutes of those Places, are only Laws. And of this Opinion Mr. *Selden* \* seems to be, as to the other *European* Nations, whose Opinion is very considerable in this Matter.

After the consideration of the Pandects and Code, if I should take in all those large Volumes, that have been writ upon them, I should make no end. The first attempts of this kind were pretty modest, only by explaining the Text in short Glosses, which was *Accursius's* method: But he having not had the assistances of Humane Learning and particularly of the Greek Tongue, the want of these have betray'd him to gross and childish mistakes: And it is a wretched Gloss, where a Sentence of Greeks occurs in the Text, *Hæc Græca sunt quæ nec legi nec intelligi possunt*. And yet his Authority is great in the Law, much greater than that of his Son; of whom it is said he never made a good Gloss (A).

Commentaries succeeded Glosses and have swoln to a larger Bulk: In this kind, *Bartolus* is of great name; whose Authority is as much valu'd in some Nations amongst the Modren Lawyers, as *Papinian's* was among the Ancients; who

who, as he was to be follow'd, where the Opinions of the Lawyers were equally divided, (m) so *Bartolus's* Opinions of late have been of like force. He was confessedly an extraordinary Man, and might have done more service in his Profession, had he not liv'd under the same Infelicity of times, and wanted the same helps that *Accursius* did, whereby he dash'd against the same Rocks. It was from him, we have had that noted and almost Proverbial saying that has cast some reproach upon the Law, (n) *De verbebus non curat* (m) Duct de usq. l. 1. c. 8. *juris consultus*, an odd expression for an Interpreter of that Law, one Title whereof is, *of the signification of Words*: But this was a Title, that he did not care to meddle with, and which his Enemies have charg'd him, with not daring to explain. Notwithstanding all his Faults, he ought not to have been treated so reproachfully by *L. Valla*, and the Men of Polite Letters; for however unpolish'd he may be in his Style; or nice or obscure in expressions, or how ever ignorant in History or Roman Customs, it is certain, he is not that Goose and Ass, that *Valla* (o) would make (n) V. vir Baxi. ap. Freker. (o) Op. i. 631. him; and that he has more Law, tho the others may have more Learning.

M

The

The Polite Men of this Set, who gave the last turn to the Law, were *Alciat*, *Cujacius*, *Budaus* and others ; they have indeed restor'd the Law to its primitive Purity and Lustre, and cloath'd it in a more elegant Dress, and made that a pleasant study, which in the hands of *Bartolus* and *Baldus* was uncouth and rugged ; They have given it all the advantages of Humane Learning, and ransackt all the Stores of Arts and Sciences to fetch thence Beauties to adorn it: But whilst they have busied themselves in various Learning, and attended to too many things at once, they have been thought wanting in the one main thing ; and have had less Law, than many of those whom they censure and despise. *Ant. Augustinus*, who should have been nam'd with the first of this Rank and Order, does in a manner confess the charge, and owns that *Budaus* whilst he had been too much distracted, in attaining the Tongues, had made no great progress in the knowledge of the Law. The most considerable improvements, that have been made by these Men, have been principally upon one Title, about the *signification of on Words*, in which, however they may have excell'd, they have been rewarded by *Bartolus's* followers, with no better Character



Character, than that of Graminarians and Critics. And indeed many of their Discoveries are not very remarkable and some of them trifling ; a Catalogue of which may be had in *Albericus Gentilis's* two last Dialogues, which because it is too sportful, I forbear to mention. That wherein they uncontestedly excell being the Signification of words, will be allow'd to fall much short of the knowledge of things.

One thing should not have been omitted, that has occasion'd no little obcurity and confusion: when the Law by the Bulk and number of Books that were Writ, was grown too voluminous, a way was taken up of contracting it into a narrow Compais, by short Notes and Abbreviations: This way was found to be of such use and so Compendious, that it prevail'd much, but its inconvenience was quickly discover'd from the Ambiguity that such short Notes were subject to, and therefore they were forbid by a Constitution (p) of *Justinian*. (p) Cod. l. 1. Tit. 17. However the mischief was not so easily remedy'd as forbid, for it still prevail'd, and that almost in *Justinian's* own time, and some of them have crept into the Florentine Pandects, which tho not so Ancient as *Justinian*, (as some have

(q) V. Ant.  
Aug. E-  
mend. l. 1.  
c. 1.

been of opinion, but whom this very thing (q) does sufficiently confute) yet must be granted to have been writ soon after; and at last they grew to that height, and occasion'd such Confusion and Ambiguity, that several Treatises have been writ to explain them; a Collection of which, and a Specimen of the notes may be had in *Putschius*. Even of late they have been found so troublesome, that the *Italian* entred them in his Prayer, amongst the three Evils he Petition'd to be deliver'd from, (he might have deprecated greater Evils) and after, *Da furia de villani*, and *Da guazzabuglio di medici*; *Da gli & cetera de notai*, was the third Petition (r).

Conform.  
Hug. de  
Orig. Scr.  
c. 11.

And here again, as in the entrance upon this Chapter, I must profess my esteem for the Roman Laws, which I would by no means be thought to undervalue, and all that I infer or pretend to prove is this, that no humane Laws are exempt from faults, since those that have been lookt upon as most perfect in their kind have been found upon Enquiry, to have so many.

C H A P. XIV.

Of Canon Law.

I Have no design to bring contempt upon the Antient Canons, which were doubtless, very well fitted for the occasions of the Church in its purer Ages; having been fram'd by Men of Primitive Simplicity, in free and conciliar Debates, without any ambitious Regards. That which is justly complain'd of is, that these Canons are too much neglected, and a New sort of Discipline erected in the Church, establish'd upon different foundations and oft-times for different ends with the former; which is so notorious, that it has given occasion to a distinction amongst some Members of the Church of *Rome*, betwixt the Old and New Law: Especially amongst the French, who pretend that the *Gallican Privileges*, are chiefly Remainers of the Ancient Canons, which they have preserv'd against the Encroach-

ments of the Roman Pontif. For that Prelate having taken advantage of the fall of the Roman Empire, and of the confusion among his Neighbours, upon the Inundation of the *Goths* and *Vandals* and other Barbarous People; and of the ignorance that ensu'd thereon; made a pretty easie shift to erect a New Empire, and for its support it was necessary to contrive and frame a New Law. I shall not recount the several advances that were made, in the several Ages; *Isidor's* Collection was the great and bold Stroke, which tho, in its main parts, it has been since discover'd (f) to be as impudent a Forgery as ever was, yet to this Day stands recorded for good Authority in the Canon Law.

The two principal parts of this Law, are, the *Decree*, and the *Decretals*, which to give them the greater face of Authority, answer to the *Pandects* and *Code* in the Civil Law: For as the *Pandects* contain the Answers and Opinions of famous Lawyers; and the *Code*, the Decrees made and Sentences given by Emperors; so the *Decree* consists chiefly of the Opinions of the Fathers and Definitions of Councils; and the *Decretals*, of the occasional Sentences and Decrees of Popes. As to the *Clementines* and

Ex-

*Extravagants*, which may answer to the Novels, they are only Supplements to the other two parts, and we have yet no Institutes in the Canon Law. For as to *Lancelottus's* Book of Institutes, which *Dr. Duck* seems to make a part of the *Corpus*, he is therein mistaken, for wanting Sanction and Authority, (u) it is only yet a private work.

(u) *Don-*  
*jat Hist.*  
*du Droit*  
*Can. Par.*  
*2. Cha.*  
*10.*

The Decree carries contradiction in its very Title, being *Concordantia Discordantium Canonum*, or a Concordance of disagreeing Canons: Or if there were none in the Title, I doubt there are too many in the Body of the Work, which have occasion'd innumerable *Glosses* and busi'd the Canonists in reconciling them. It having been compil'd by *Gratian* in an Ignorant Age, we ought not to be too nice in examining it and perhaps it were unreasonable to require too much accuracy, amongst so much Ignorance; and therefore if his Style in Latin be somewhat Course, or if in quoting a Greek Father or Council, he mistakes their meaning, or gives a wrong one, that might easily be forgiven him, Greek being a Language, that was not understood in that Age, and was rather the misfortune of the time, than his own: But then if he gives us such Fathers and Councils

(x) Ant.  
Aug. De  
Emend.  
Grav. Dial.  
2. &c.

as have no Being, or if he mistakes a Father for a Council or a Council for a Father; this surely is not so pardonable, and yet this is, what he has been charg'd with, (x) by Authors of his own Communion. And among the Jesuits, who are not usually wanting in the Cause of their Church, *Bellarmin* owns, that he has quoted a Heretick instead of a Father. And the poor Monk having probably never seen many of the Decrees and Councils, that he had occasion to use, nor trac'd his Authorities to their Fountains, but having made use of others Collections, it was impossible but he should fall into mistakes; which are so numerous, especially in the names of Persons and Places, that a Man had need of good skill in History, and of a New Geography to understand him aright; and without such helps, one may easily lose himself in travelling the Decree.

It might be expected that he should be pretty exact in the names of Popes, these being his Lawgivers, whose Authority he makes use of upon all occasions, and yet even in these he frequently miscaries, and gives us such names as were never heard of in Ancient Story. I can never read him, but he puts  
me

me in mind of a late noted Author, who has given us a *Church History of Bishops and their Councils*; for as in that Book, you may meet with a Council at *Arausican*, (y) Another at *Toletane* and a third at *Vienna* near *France*, with others as remote from knowledge, as these are; so in *Gratian*, you may find like mistakes, only altering the Language, a *Concilium Arausicense, Anquiritanum, Bispalense*, and more of the like nature: one would be tempted to think, that Mr. B. had study'd the Canon Law and had borrow'd his Authorities from thence.

(y) V. Mr.  
B. & Dr.  
M's Answ.

After so much Ignorance, we are not to wonder, if *Gratian* have no very favourable opinion of Humane Learning, which is condemned in the Decree, more particularly Poetry and Logic: Those of the highest order in the Church, even Bishops themselves (z) are forbid to read Books of Heathen Learning, and St. *Jerom's* Authority is urg'd who was reprov'd by an Angel for reading *Cicero*. It is true the Canonists endeavour to reconcile this, by alledging other places in the Decree, where Learning is allowed, and by showing it to be *Gratian's* way, to cite differing Canons and Opinions to the same purpose; and I will

(z) V. Mr.  
Hind.  
Episcopa.  
Gentiliu.  
libros non  
legat—

will grant so much if they please, but then it can be no great commendation of a Law, that it contains such contrary Opinions, that it must be another Man's work to reconcile them. Nor does his Morality exceed his Learning; the Decree in case of two Evils, the one of which is unavoidable, allows us to chuse the less (4); which although the Canonists would understand of the Evil of punishment, yet it seems pretty plain from the Text, and the Instances there produc'd, that it must be understood of the Evil of Sin; in which Sense the Case can never happen, unless we will admit of a necessity of fining, which is as impossible in Morality, as any the greatest difficulty can be, in Nature. That which follows in the 34<sup>th</sup> Distinction is yet worse, *is qui non habet uxorem, & pro uxore Concubinam habet, a Communionem non repellatur*; which in modesty I forbear to translate, and could hardly have believe it, to have been in *Gratian*: And when I first met with it there, I thought it had been only to be found in some old Editions, and concluded with myself, it must be amended in that more correct and authoriz'd Edition by *Gregory XIII.* But was still more surpris'd, when I found it stand there uncorrected,



ed, as if there had been no hurt done. I think nothing can be said worse, unless what is said by the Learned *Ant. Augustinus* in his fifteenth Dialogue of his *Emendation*, to be in some Books of *Gratian* be so, *Qui non habet uxorem, loco illius Concubinam habere debet.* If any thing can be said worse of them, than they have said themselves, it may be had in *Luther* (b) who began the Reformation with burning the Canon Law, and in vindication of what he had done, made a Collection of such Articles, as were most liable to give offence. I have not yet compar'd his Quotations with the Text, and therefore do not put them down, but if they be faithful, I am sure there is enough, to give a Man a hard opinion of the Canon Law.

(b) *Op. r.*  
*Tam. 2. p.*  
*120. W. i.*

The Decretals tho not altogether so gross as the Decree, are more Imperious, having appear'd in the world, when the Papal Power was grown to its full height, and having been compil'd by *Gregory IX.* and consisting principally of the Constitutions of *Innocent III.* the first of whom wag'd almost a continual War with an Emperor; and the latter Subjugated a King, and call'd him his *Vassal*, nothing better could be expected. For the several Conciliar Decrees and  
Canons

Canons were intermix'd, with the Papal Constitutions, yet they are with such Exceptions and Reservations to the Pope's dispensing Power and absolute Dominion, that they became useless: Pope's were now become the Fountain, of all Power, and both Princes and Councils were brought under their Obedience. It is expressly said in the Decretals (c) *That no Councils have prefix'd Laws to the Church of Rome, inasomuch as all Councils do borrow their Authority from that Church, and the Papal Authority is excepted in them all.* And Innocent, in the Title, *De Majoritate*, exalts the Papal Power as much above the Regal, as Spiritual things are better than Temporal, or the Soul Superior to the Body; and having compar'd these two Powers, to the two great Lights in the Firmament, infers from thence, That the Pontifical Authority, is as much Superior to the Regal, as the Sun is greater than the Moon. Upon which there arising some difference, concerning the proportion of Magnitude, betwixt these two Luminaries, and consequently betwixt these two other great Powers; the Gloss does learnedly refer us, to *Ptolemy's Almagest* to adjust the proportion. But I need not cite particular Constitutions,

stitutions, a good part of the Decretals turning upon this point, and resolving all into a Monarchical Power at Rome : For which reason the five Books of Gregory (a) have not yet been receiv'd in France without Restrictions; no more than the sixth Book of Boniface VIII. has been.

(a) *Declar.  
Hist. du  
Droit Can.  
Par. 2.  
Ch. 15. 17.*

The Clementines, notwithstanding a good part of them were given in a pretended General Council at Vienna in France, yet are no Conciliar Decrees, only the Constitutions of Clement V. Such having been the manner of some of the late Western Councils, That the Bishops were only Assessors or Advisers, or at the most Assenters, and the Pope alone defin'd in a pretty absolute manner ; and therefore they are not styl'd Decrees of such a Council, only the Constitutions of Clement in the Council at Vienna. The Extravagants are tedious things, and want that Majesty, which Brevity gives to Sanctions and Decrees: Both they and the Clementines have this besides, that having been compil'd in the Scholastick Age of the Church, they are mixt with Theological Questions, and are as much Divinity, as Law.

Not

Nor is the Gloss better than the Text, which, however it be of great authority among the Canonists, yet it may be justly questioned, whether it deserves so much? For to take things as they rise and to go no further than the first Page of the Decree: *Gratian* having begun his Book very properly, by distinguishing betwixt the several sorts of Right, and having said that *Jus*, was so called because it was *Just*. The Gloss upon this observes, that there is a Right that is neither Equitable nor Just (e) and produceth Instances, that are neither pertinent, nor prove the Point; and then concludes, that in all Cases upon a Reason and for public Good, Rigor is induc'd against natural Equity, and in some Cases, without a Reason. Take another Instance upon the Decretals, (f) which beginning with the Symbol, of our Faith: upon that the Author of the Gloss enquires into the nature of Faith, and having pass'd the Apostle's account, as an imperfect Definition, gives a much more insufficient one of his own; for which he is justly chastis'd by *Erasmus*: And as for the word Symbol that should not seem to be over difficult, he derives it from, *Syn*, and *Bolus*, which in the Language of the Gloss does signify,

(e) *Quandocumque est aliquod, jus, quod non est æquum nec justum—*  
*Dist. 1.*

(f) *Idem.*  
*Idem.*

nific, *Morsellus* ; and then enquiring into the number of Symbols, he adds a fourth to the other three ; for no reason that I can see, unless it were, that they might answer to so many Gospels. Besides other less mistakes upon the same Title, which I pass over, because the same Gloss says, that, *Modicum quid non nocet*, and cites the Decretals \* \* *Lit. c. Tit. 3. 13.* for it, where *modica res*, is said not to induce Simony ; and yet the *Modica Res*, here mention'd, is a Horse.

The Canonists are too numerous to be mention'd here, and therefore I pass them over, and indeed they generally keep to their Text, and run out upon the power of the Pope, to the great Diminution of Councils, or indeed of any other Authority : And whereas in that large Collection of Tracts that was publish'd at *Venice*, there are two Gross Volumes concerning the power of Popes, and their Cardinals ; it is very observable, that there is scarce any thing said of Councils, unless by such, as will be sure to subject them to the Pope. That Haughty Bishop is their darling Theme, and one of them has gone so low, as to write a Tract, (g) about the Adoration of his Feet. Nor shall I insist upon the differing

(g) Joseph Stevan. val  
Tract. De  
adoratione  
Pedum  
Romani  
Pontificis  
Tom. 12.

fering Opinions and Constitutions in the Decree and Decretals, in how many things they interferr and cross, and in how many more, they contradict the Civil Law. *Bapt a Sancto Blasio*, has furnish'd us with two hundred contradictions betwixt the Canon and Civil Law: *Zanetin* has discover'd a great many differences of the same kind, and I suppose it were no hard matter, to swell the account yet higher: But I leave those, we have already, to be reconcil'd by the Learned in the Law.

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C H A P. XV.

Of Physic.

IF any credit may be given to *Pliny*  
 (1) we shall have no reason to boast<sup>(i) Lib. 8.</sup>  
 of the Invention of Physic, two great<sup>c. 26. 27.</sup>  
 Operations in that Art, having been  
 owing to two inconsiderable Creatures.  
 Bleeding and Purge have been taught  
 us by the *Hippopotamus* and *Ibis*, the  
 former of which being over-charg'd  
 with Blood, breaths a Vain by rowling  
 himself among the sharp reeds of the  
*Nile*; and the latter sucking in the Salt  
 Water, administers a Cathartic, by turn-  
 ing her Bill upon her Fundament. I  
 will not vouch for my Author, (whom  
 if I would make use of, it should be to  
 a different purpose, in showing, how  
 little reliance there is upon our Natural  
 History) although the account he gives  
 here of Physic may be as true, as theirs  
 N is,

is, who fetch its Original from *Æsculapius* and *Apollo*.

It is doubtless ancient, Men's necessity and desire of Health did put them early upon this search, and *Hippocrates* who liv'd 2000 years ago has left a Treatise concerning *ancient Physic*; so that it was ancient in his time. But the Physic then in use was chiefly Emperical, *Hippocrates* brought in the Rational way, and what he did in this Art, did so far surpass others labours, that their Works are in a manner lost and forgot; and *Hippocrates* who was then a Modern, is to us a very ancient Author. His Age gave him Authority, and although that, and his short way of writing, have rendred him less intelligible to ordinary Readers, yet he was almost universally follow'd: His *Aphorisms* have been lookt upon as Maxims, and *Macrobius* (*k*) speaks of his knowledge in such lofty strains, as are only agreeable to God Almighty. Notwithstanding, of late he has been discover'd to be a frail Man, his Aphorisms have been examin'd, and the danger detected, in blindly following great Names; and how mischievous the consequences may have been, in an implicit submission to all his Rules, may

*Hippocrates*  
*quæ tam*  
*fallere*  
*quæ falli*  
*non possunt.*



may appear from one, which once crudely swallow'd, has cost so many lives, all which might have been sav'd, had the contrary practice been ventured upon sooner, which is now found (1) to be not only Safe but Salutory.

(1) *Boyl.  
us. Exper.  
Phil. Tr.*

*Galen* as he differs from *Hippocrates* in some things, so he follows him in the main, and both in explaining his Author, and where he gives us his own Sentiments, is somewhat tedious; he tires and distracts his Reader as much by being too large, as the other does, by saying too little, which yet might be excus'd, had he in so many gross Volumes and different Treatises, left us a Compleat Body of Physic. But this he is so far from having done, that it scarce seems to have been in his design; most of his pieces having been undertaken with particular views, either to gratifie Friends, or as helps of memory, or exercises of invention. His Anatomical Pieces, which have been cry'd up above measure, have been less admir'd, since nicer Observations have been made in Anatomy, than he was capable of making; and those which he has made, are often erroneous, for want of Comparative Anatomy, in comparing and distinguishing.

stinguishing, betwixt the Bodies of Men and Brutes : Most of his Observations having been made upon the latter, and it being questionable, whether he ever saw the dissection of a Humane Body. Even his Treatise *De Usu Partium* has been censur'd, as in many things grounded upon Inferences of his own, rather than upon Observations from Experience and View ; and the Parts are described there in such order, as none will think fit to imitate, unless any man can find method, in beginning with the hand and proceeding to the Foot, and so up again to the Belly. And tho' he has been remarkable for his care and tenderness of Life, which he has express'd, as in other Instances, so particularly in being against publishing exquisite Treatises of the Nature of Poysons, yet I question whether it will be thought another Instance of it, that he sometimes took away six pounds of Blood (*m*) in a Fever : And bled his Patients, till by fainting they could bear no longer, for which he was twitted in his own time, as appears from his Books (*n*) and was said to work Cures by murdering Diseases.

Whatever faults he had must have been deriv'd upon his Successors, for as he com-

*m* De  
*and*  
*Ret. p.*  
*Sang. mif.*  
*cap. 14.*  
*(n) De*  
*Met. Med.*  
*l. 9. . 4.*

commented upon *Hippocrates*, so the following Physicians have copy'd *Galen*. The Greeks *Oribasius*, *Agineta*, and *Etius* have in a manner transcribed him; and *Avicen* and the Arabians have done little more, than translate *Galen* into their own Tongue: And their Translations having not been over faithfull, and the Version double; first from the Greek to the *Arabic*, and from that back again into the Latin, they cannot be depended upon without imminent hazard, especially in the names of Drugs and Plants, where the mistake in a word, may endanger a Life. They were subtle Men and most of them Logicians, accordingly they have given method, and shed subtilty upon their Author and little more can be said for them.

The Chymists have appear'd with so much Ostentation, and with such Contempt of the Arabians and *Galen*, that we have been made to expect wonders from their performances. *Paracelsus* who would be thought the Head of a Sect, has treated the Galenists so rudely, as if they were the most ignorant Men in the World, and had little skill beyond a Plaister or a Purge: Tho nei-

(o) Hel-  
mont.  
Chym.  
Pzinc.

ther ought he, to have vaunted so much of his Discoveries ; One of his great Admirers (o) having shown, that some part of his skill was stole : And it is some prejudice against him, that a Man who pretended to such immortal Remedies, should himself die in his fortyseventh year, whereas *Hippocrates* and *Galen* are said to have lived beyond a hundred.

If there be any thing certain in Chymistry, it ought to be their first Principles, which the Chymists have substituted in the place of others, which they have thought fit to explode ; and pretend that theirs are so evident from the *Analysis* of Bodies, that there can be no room for doubt ; and yet whereas at first, we had only three of these Principles, their number is already swoln to five, and who knows whether they may stop there ? Or whether their practice be better grounded than the principles they go on ? For tho great Cures have been effected by Chymical prescriptions, and those too in a manner less cloying and nauseous, than the former practice would admit of, by separating the Faces, with which the Galenical Medicines are clog'd ; yet the question

question will be, whether they be not attended with other inconveniences? Whether they be equally safe, and have no dangerous consequences to discourage their use? It will not be deny'd, that the Chymical Preparations are more vigorous and potent in their effects than the Galenical are, and often work such Cures, as the other gross Medicines have not activity enough to effect: But then as their activity is great, is not the danger so too? And does not the same power, that enables them to heal, empower them to destroy? And whilst the Cures are recorded, are not the miscarriages forgot? Have not our Enterprising Chymists sometimes preserv'd life, only to make it the more miserable? And sav'd their Patients by ruining their Constitutions? Have not their strong *Opiats* often disorder'd the Head? And their too free use of *Mercury*, *Antimony*, &c. the whole habit of the Body? If such Cures be offer'd me, I hardly accept them. He is the true Physitian, who attends to all possible Consequences, who does not heal one Disease, by procuring us a worse, but restores such a life, as a Man can enjoy; but where shall this Perfect Man be found?

(p) Var. Ob-  
servat. p.  
70. 71.

(q) Le Com-  
pte Let. 8.

Some have gone as far as *China* to find him out, of which People's skill such Wonders have been reported, as the Chymists themselves can hardly pretend to. The Circulation of the Blood, which with us is a Modern Discovery, has been known there according to *Vossius* (p) 4000 years, they have such skill in Pulses as is not to be imagin'd, but by those that are acquainted with them; and the Arabians are there said, to have borrow'd thence their knowledge in Physic. Even the Missionaries who have reason to know them best, grant, that there is somewhat surprising in their skill of Pulses, (q) tell us that they have made observation in Medicine 4000 years; and that when all the Books in *China* were ordered to be burnt by the Emperor *Chiohamti*, those in Physic were preserv'd by a particular exception. But yet they likewise acquaint us, that most of their skill is built upon Observations, which have not been improv'd, to such purposes as they would have been by the Europeans; and that for want of Philosophy and Anatomy the great Foundations of Medicine, their Notions are confus'd, and their Practice in some things ridiculous. The *Chinese* are

are an unaccountable sort of People, strangely compounded of Knowledge and Ignorance; they have had Printing among them, and Gun-powder, and the use of the Compass, long before they came among the Europeans; and yet for want of due improvement, these useful Inventions have not turn'd to any great account; and Physic has had the same Fate. So that after all our Travel, the most considerable improvements in this Art, are most probably to be found at home; and being so near, need not be much enquir'd into.

We have generally Men enough ready to publish discoveries whether real or pretended, whilst deficiencies in most Arts are often conceal'd or pass'd by in silence. What noise have we had for some years about *Transplantation* of Diseases, and *Transfusion* of Blood, the latter of which has taken up so much room in the *Journal Des Sçavans*, and *Philosophical Transactions*; and the English and French have contended for the discovery; which notwithstanding as far as I can see, is like to be of no use or Credit to either Nation. The retrieving the Ancient *Brittanica* has made no less noise, *Muntingius* has writ

writ a Book upon it, and we were made to hope for a specific against the Scurvy: After all it is like to come to nothing, and men loose their Teeth and die as they did before. The Circulation of the Spirits is a third Invention, which, if I might have leave to judge, I should think scarce capable of being prov'd; for neither are the Spirits themselves visible, nor, as far as I know, does any Ligature or Tumor in the Nerve discover their Motion. The Circulation of the Blood has indeed been said to be demonstrated to Sense by *Monsieur Leeuwenhoek*, by the help of his Glasses, and Men have been lookt upon as dull, that will not see it; I will not question the Fact, tho I cannot but observe, that a late *Italian* (r) Author has in effect done it for me, who either has not met with *M. Leeuwenhoek* and his Experiments, or cannot see so clearly in his Glasses as he does; which however it be, ought to be some check upon assurance. I might enumerate a world of such like particulars; *Amvald's Panacea* discuss'd by *Libavius*, and *Butler's Stone* so much magnifi'd by *Helmont*, were as much talkt of in their own time as most things

cre. tion.  
Fijo Cre-  
mona An.  
90. ap.  
Alt. Lips.



things we can pretend to, and yet they are dead and have been buried with their Authors.

The most considerable real discoveries that have been lately made, have been in Anatomy, and Botany: no Man in his right wits, will contest the former; tho the discoveries in that kind have been rather in the parts of the Body, than in the Humors and Spirits and Blood, which are the principal Seat of Health as well as Disease: For the first seem design'd for Strength and Motion, and fall not improperly under the Surgeon's Skill; the latter are the Seat of Life and under the consideration of Physic, and are yet imperfectly understood. Till these be thoroughly known, which perhaps they never will, there will be one fundamental Deficiency in our Physic.

Another great Deficiency was observ'd by my Lord Bacon (f) in his time, that will I believe always hold, and that is in Compative Anatomy: He then granted, as we may with more safety, that simple Anatomy had been clearly handled, and that the several parts

(f) Adv.  
of Learn.  
b. 4. c. 2.

parts had been diligently observ'd and describ'd ; but the same parts in different Persons had not been duly compar'd, nor have they yet been ; tho we may differ as much in the inward parts of our Bodies, as we do in our outward Features, and that difference may occasion great variety in Application and Cure. This is a deficiency that is not like to have a speedy remedy, requiring more Dissections than most Men have opportunity of making.

Nor are the deficiencies less in the Botanic part ; for though this sort of knowledge be mightily enlarg'd, since the discovery of the East and West *Indies* , by opening a vast Field, and giving a much larger range to it than it had before, yet the great difficulty remains still to be overcome : our Herbs, it is true, are sufficiently stor'd with Plants, and we have made a tolerable shift, to reduce them to *Classes* , and to describe them by Marks and Signatures, so far as to distinguish them from one another : But as their Characteristic marks are known, are their Virtues so too ? I believe no Man will venture to affirm it. The qualities of  
many

many of our Plants and Simples are yet in the dark, or so uncertain in their operations, that they are rather matter of Curiosity, than Subjects of Skill: Or where some of their vertues are too remarkable to be conceal'd, yet they act one way singly, and quite otherwise in Mixture and Composition; or they may have one effect, when outwardly applied, and a quite different one when taken inwardly, after they have undergone so many alterations in the Blood and Stomach, as they must do, before they can reach the part affected; and they may again vary, according to the different temper of the Bodies, to which they are applied. It is not enough to say, their natures may be known by being Chymically resolved, for their effects are often very disproportionable to the principles and parts that result from the *Analysis*; there are other parts more subtle, and yet most active and vigorous in their Operation, that act upon the Spirits, as the grosser part do upon the Blood and Humors, and those the subtlest Chymists, and the most exquisite *Analysis* will not be able to reach.

In

In short whether we consider our Bodies, or our Medecines, Physic must be the most uncertain thing imaginable: Our Bodies are more compounded and unequal, than other Bodies are, most other Creatures live upon a simple Diet and are regular in their Appetites; whereas Man feeds almost upon every thing, Flesh and Fish, Fruits and Plants, from the Fruit of our Gardens to the Mushroom upon the Dunghil; and where Appetite fails, the Invention is call'd in to swell the Account; high Sauces and rich Spices are fetch'd from the *Indies*, which occasion strong Fermentations and infinite disorder in the Blood and Humors: Hence proceed such variety of Diseases as perplex and distract the Physicians Skill. A sound Body and Healthy Constitution is easily restor'd when out of order, Nature in a great measure does its own work, (a noted instance whereof, we have in *Cornaro* in *Lessius*, who by regularity and temperance had brought an infirm Body to such a temper, that he was not troubled with any Disease, and any wound in him would in a manner heal it self) whereas in a disordered

ordered Body, every little thing is Wound and Disease, and a Physitian must give a new Constitution, before he can perfect a Cure, this is a hard tryal upon our Physitian, and yet by our way of living we often require it.

It is the harder, because his Medicines and Methods of Cure will not enable him to work Wonders: For tho our *Materia Medica* be large enough, and to look into our Dispensatories, one would think no Disease incurable, yet the mischief of it is, all those fine Medicines, do not always answer in the Application, nor have they been found so Soverain in our Bodies, as they are in our Books. All which things have so distracted our Physitians, that they vary even in the most common Methods: At one time they keep their Patients so close and warm, as almost to stifle them with care, and all on a sudden the Cold *Regimen* is in vogue; In one Age *Alkalies* are in fashion, and in the next *Acids* begin to recover Credit; *Antimony* at one time is next to Poyson, and again, the most innocent thing in the world, if duly prepared; Bleeding

Bleeding is practis'd in one Nation, and condemn'd by their Neighbours; some People are prodigal of their Blood, and others so sparing, as if so much Life and Blood went together; *Helmont* and his Followers are for the latter way, *Galen* and *Willis* and their Followers encourage the former; and all of them, as you will imagine, with equal assurance.

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C H A P. XVI.

*Of Critical Learning.*

Criticism as it is usually practis'd, is little more than an Art of finding Faults, and those commonly little ones too, and such as are of small importance to the Scope and Design of an Author. Monsieur Bayle was sensible of this, whose first design was, to publish a Dictionary of Faults, but was diverted from his Purpose, by his Friends representing to him, that they were not considerable enough to be insisted on: And yet he had that to say for himself, that they were such as were taken notice by Scaliger and other noted Critics, either some mistake in a Name, Time, Place, or other minute Circumstance. The truth of it is, Criticism is at a low Ebb, Men will be finding faults in Authors, and yet our store is well near exhausted, for there

O

are

are few Faults in this kind, that have not been taken notice of.

*Erasmus* and the first set of Critics had Matter enough to work upon, a long Age of Ignorance had cut out sufficient Employment, by vitious Copies and obtruding Spurious for Genuine Authors; the distinguishing of which was a Work of Use and Skill: But after the Business is pretty well done, the Vein of Criticising still continues; Men will play at small Games rather than want Employment, so that our Modern Critics have usually either degenerated into Grammarians, or if they soar higher, it is too often, by venturing too freely upon those Books, which ought to be handled with greater tenderness: Their Business sometimes is in finding Faults, where there are none, or in perverting the Sense, that they may make room for Correction. And for as much as these Men do find Faults with all the World, they have no reason to take it amiss, if one who is none of their Number, does find one or two, in them. I shall seek for no more (nor have I room in the compass of a Chapter) but they shall be in two Critics of Name; one of whom has writ the *Art of Criticism*, the other, *A Critical History of the Old and New Testament*.

The



The former, Monsieur *le Clerc*, is as free in his Censures, as any Man I ever met with, and oft times as Unhappy: He begins with *Erasmus*, for I take the first thing I meet with, whom he exposeth (t) as ignorant in Geography, for having in his Notes upon *Act. 28.* mistaken *Regium*, a City in *Italy*, for a Town in *Sicily*; and for having took *Melita* an Island, either for *Mitylene* a City; or the same Island, that is situate in the *Mediterranean*, or *African* Sea, for an obscure Island in the *Adriatic*; and then falls foul on him, as a Man that had scarce ever seen a Geographical Map. It seem'd very strange to me, that *Erasmus* who is known to have writ his Commentaries upon the New Testament, with the Map of the *Roman* Empire always before him, should be guilty of such Errors in Geography, and therefore I had the curiosity to consult the Author: I have not so bad an Edition of *Erasmus*, as Monsieur *Le Clerc* quotes, nor do I believe he quotes him faithfully in any Edition, but I consulted the worst Edition I could meet with; in that, he is so far from placing *Rhezium* in *Sicily*, that he exprestly says, it is a City in *Italy*, and corrects *St. Jerome* for having been guilty of so gross a mistake: And as to *Melita* the Island, he di-

(t) *Act. Crit. cap. 1. p. 13. Ed. Lond.*

rectly distinguisheth it from *Mitylene* the City, which Island he placeth betwixt *Africa* and *Sicily*, a Situation very different from that, which Monsieur *Le Clerc* endeavors to fasten upon him.

Monsieur *Le Clerc* in the next place is angry with *Erasmus* for quoting *Hugo Carrensis*, being an Author of no Credit, and one who liv'd in the Scholastic Age, and seems to think he was led into his Mistake, by trusting so mean an Authority: It is true *Erasmus* does quote *Hugo Carrensis*, but it is only to make sport with him, as he does sometimes with the Scholemen, and Monsieur *Le Clerc* need not have gone above ten Lines further for a convincing Proof of this, where *Erasmus* calls upon his Reader to laugh (u) at *Hugo Carrensis* for his Critical Observation upon the Sign of *Castor* and *Polux*.

(u) in *Ad.*  
*Apost.* c. 28.  
v. 11.

Well! But *Erasmus* is not yet clear of Monsieur *Le Clerc*, for he remembers, that *Erasmus* somewhere in his Notes upon *St. Jerome's* Epistles, mistakes the City *Mitylene* for the Island *Melita*, only he forgets the particular place, but is somewhere, where *St. Jerome* mentions *St. Paul's* Shipwrack: I always suspect a  
Man

Man where he forgets the place, and therefore I will help his Memory ; it is in St. *Jerom's* Epistle to *Oceanus* in the first Tome of *Erasmus's* Edition, where, if *Erasmus* reads *Mitylene*, I suppose it was only because, it was the same word, which was us'd by his Author St. *Jerome*, for both of them make it an Island and expressly the same, where St. *Paul* suffered Shipwrack, and without question the same, that *Erasmus* meant in his Notes upon the *Acts*. If *Erasmus* be to be blam'd in any thing, it is for making St. *Jerome*, read *Mitylene* instead of *Melita*, for in all the MSS. that I have seen of that Father, and I have seen more than one, the reading is, *Melita* : But I dare say that is more than *M. Le Clerc* knows. *Erasmus* may have had mistakes in Criticism, for tho he tells us of himself, that his care in publishing St. *Jerome* was such, that it cost him almost as much pains, in restoring his Works, as it did the Author in writing them ; yet *Marianus Victorius* (x) pretends to have made 1500 Corrections upon him barely in the Edition of that Father ; and the *Benedictines* no doubt have added more. But as for *M. Le Clerc's* attacks, I dare be confident, they will nei-

(x) Epist.  
Pio Quarto

ther hurt *St. Jerome* nor any of his Editors ; tho he falls as foul upon the *Benedictines*, as he does upon *Erasmus*. He would gladly make the world believe, that they understand not Greek, and indeed they pretend less that way, and therefore their chief care hitherto has been in the Latin Fathers, in which they have deserv'd great Commendation : But as

(y) *Tom. 2.*  
*ap. 13.*

to *M. Le Clerc's* Critical Observation (y) which he passeth upon them with so much Contempt, it is so far short of proof to me, that I cannot but think their mistake better than his Correction, I am sure more agreeable to *St. Jerome's* meaning.

(z) *Patres*  
*Apostol.*  
*Ant. 98.*

He has past the same censure in another Work (z) upon one who has less deserv'd it, the Learned Sorbonist *Cotelarius*, who has not been suspected of want of Greek, till *M. Le Clerc* took him to task : He has caught him tripping in his Greek, where all things were plain, and tells us he has shown it in his Notes upon *Barnabas* and *Clemens*. For my part I can meet with no material Corrections upon either of these Authors, and the only thing he chargeth him with in his Preface is, That he renders, *κατακελευσας*, *Capitulatim*, which in *M. Le*

*Clerc*

*Clerc's* opinion, should be *summam*, which in reading our *Animadverter*, a Man would think *Cotelerius* had done, either in *Barnabas* or *Clement's* Epistles. I have read over hastily these three Epistles; I will not be over-positive, but I am pretty confident, the word does not occur in any one of the three; and if it be to be met with in the *Clementines*, it is nothing to the *Animadverter's* purpose; for we are not to expect to meet always with Classical Greek there, or with words, always in the sense of Classical Authors. *Cotelerius* (a) has rendered the Verb *καταλαμβάνω*, as *M. Le Clerc* would have it; and if he have rendered the Adverb otherwise, it is probable it was not from mistake, but judgment. Had *M. Le Clerc* consider'd, that there is a sort of Ecclesiastical Greek, very different from the Classical, he would have been more reserv'd in his Censures. But this is a sort of Greek, wherewith he seems not to be much acquainted. *St. Jerome*, who understood this sort of Greek better than either of them, has rendered *ανακαταλαμβάνει* by, *recapitulare* (b); and tho' *M. Le Clerc* (b) *Ad E. phes. cap. 1. v. 10.* should oppose, I must think *St. Jerome* a good Translator.

(c) *Hist.*  
*Crit. du*  
*Vieux Test.*  
p. 1. 2.

Our *Historian* is a Critic of a higher form, but sets out as unfortunately as *M. Le Clerc* has done: To recommend the Critical Art to the World, he tells us, that in *St. Jerom's* time several Ladies of Quality, made Criticism their Study; and to prove this (c), quotes an Epistle of that Father to *Junia* and *Fretella*, which shows them to have been knowing in the Greek and Hebrew. The Hebrew was so little known in that Age, that perhaps *St. Jerome* was the onely Person of his time, that understood it perfectly, except the Jewish Rabbins, who were his Instructors; and this Father *Simon* knows very well: But as to the Father's two Ladies, I can assure him, there were none of that name that understood a word of either Language; for *Sunnia* and *Fretella* were two Learned Men of *St. Jerom's* Acquaintance. Somewhat of this was observ'd by a Friend of *Vossius* (d); and if Father *Simon* have any doubt of the thing, I have that Epistle now before me in two very fair *Manuscripts*; in both which, it is, *Dilectissimis Fratribus Sunnia & Fretela*. This is no very great mistake, but it is always ominous to stumble at the threshold.

(d) *Lett. à*  
*M. Juseli.*

I will not trace him through his mistakes ; I will onely note one other, which an English-man has better opportunities of examining, than other Men have. Father *Simon* (e) has not taken more pains, upon any one Subject, than he has done upon the ancient Manuscript *Cambridge* Copy of the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, and two other Manuscript Copies of St. *Paul's* Epistles ; the one in the King of *France's* Library ; the other in the Library of the *Benedictines* of St. *Germain* : In the Latin Copies of which, he thinks he has discover'd the Ancient Vulgar Latin, as us'd in the Western Church, before St. *Jerom's* time, to whom we owe the Vulgar now in use. I should be as glad, and would go as far to meet with the Ancient Vulgar of the New Testament, as any Man should do ; but cannot be of opinion, that Father *Simon* or *Morinus* have met with it in these Manuscripts. For to speak onely to the *Cambridge* Copy : Any one that has observ'd that Manuscript, knows, that the Latin Copy answers the Greek so exactly, that there are very few various Readings : So that if the Latin be Ancient, as the Vulgar undoubtedly was almost

(e) Hist.  
Crit. du  
N.T. c. 30,  
31, &c.  
Hist. des  
vers. c. 3,  
5, &c.

\* almost as Ancient as the Preaching of the Gospel at *Rome*, the Greek probably is so too ; and it will hardly be imagin'd, that had there been a Latin Copy so exactly agreeing with the Greek Original, before St. *Jerome's* time, that he would have ventur'd upon, or have thought a new Translation necessary. St. *Jerome's* manner of reforming the Ancient Vulgar was, by comparing and reducing it to the Greek Original : But here was a Copy already, agreeing with the Greek. If it be said, the Greek in that *Manuscript* may be a more modern Copy, but still before St. *Jerome's* time, and that the Latin is translated from it : This may be true ; but then the Latin is no longer the Ancient Vulgar, but a later Version.

There is one pretty probable way of trying it, by comparing the Citations in the New Testament, with the same Texts, as they stand in the Ancient Vulgar, in the Old. This I have done in the *Psalms*, and am far from meeting with any exact agreement : The same Observation will hold, in the Old Ecclesiastical Writers, as far as the Vulgar can be trac'd there ; and I believe



See *Hilary* the Deacon, who has been noted for keeping closest to the Old Translation, will be no Exception to this Rule. Had Father *Simon* been as quick and diligent in observing Differences, as he has been in making Agreements, perhaps he would not have been so hasty in drawing his Conclusion: In many things there is an agreement betwixt the Ancient and Modern Vulgar, but no Man will conclude from thence, that they are the same.

Father *Simon* truly observes (f), that the Greek in these *Manuscripts*, is very faulty, and grounds an Argument thereupon, that they could not for that Reason be brought from *Greece*. Had that Father had a Copy of the Latin Version of the *Cambridge* Manuscript, as he has of the Greek, he would have found, that the Latin is the more faulty of the two; and that not only in the Orthography, but Concord. For what would he think of, *Hic verbus*, Joh. c. 21. v. 23. Or of, *Retiam*, v. 6. and repeated, v. 8. Or of, *Cum esset in Mesopotamiam posteaquam mortuus esset in Charriis*, instead of, *Prius quam moraretur in Charan*: Act. 7. v. 2. Or of, *Esset ei Filium*,

(f) *Diff. N. I. c. 30.*

v. 5.

v. 5. Or of, *Justitias capisset cum genus nostrum*, v. 19? All which mistakes are to be met with in two Chapters, and more, which I forbear to mention, as I do to translate those I have mention'd, because I would not uncover the nakedness of this Version. But tho' mistakes of this kind be so common, as to occur almost in every Page of this *Manuscript*, yet they are not very agreeable to the Style of the Ages before St. Jerome. We have enough left us of the Ancient Vulgar, to enable us to judge of its Style, by all the Remainders of it we have, tho' it has not Elegancy, which it did not affect, yet it appears to have been writ with tolerable Purity; whereas the Version we are now speaking of, is uncouth and rude, and almost barbarous.

What then shall we think of it? Whatever the Version is, or whencesoever it is taken, the MS. it self seems to be Gothic; and probably both are of the same Extraction, and were done after St. Jerome's Time, when the Goths had over-run the Empire; and Father Mabillon (g) the greatest Judge of MSS of this Age, sets the second part of this MS.

MS no higher. We have already seen the Version is rude, and suitable enough to these Times, and Dr. *Marshall* (f) upon the *Gothic* Gospels has observ'd such an agreement betwixt these Gospels and the *Cambridge* MS, that he thinks them to be taken from the *Greek* of that Copy; and this agreement he has shown in several particular Texts. The Characters in that MS are many of them *Gothic*, and Father *Simon* who thinks he has met with *Greek* Letters in the *Latin* Copy of the Second Part of this MS, and Grounds an Argument upon it, is undoubtedly mistaken, for they are only *Gothic* Characters, several of which have a great affinity with the *Greek*: The Abbreviations are often the same in the *Cambridge* MS and *Gothic* Gospels, and the Numbers express'd by Numeral Letters  $\dot{\iota}$  and  $\ddot{\gamma}$  are sometimes pointed, and  $\omega$  for  $\iota$ , put down after the *Gothic* way; and *Eusebius's* Canons are plac'd in the Margin, in a rude manner, without Marks of Distinction to make them useful, with other *Gothisms*, that might be observ'd, did I design this, for any more than a Hint or Specimen. One thing is too observable to be pass'd over, that whereas our Saviour's Genealogy in

Sr.

(f) *Ad*  
*Evang.*  
*Goth.*  
p. 403.  
484, &c.

St. *Luke* is plac'd in Columns in the *Gothic* Gospels, it is put down in the very same manner in the *Cambridge MS*, which is the more remarkable, because the rest of that *MS* is writ in long Lines, and the Words run into one another. From all which, one would be apt to infer, That this Copy was taken under the *Goths*, that it is compounded of the Ancient and Modern Vulgar, which were both of them in use in the *Gothic* Churches, and particularly in *Spain* two or three Centuries after St. *Jerome's* Time; tho' in many things it differs from them both; as it needs must, whilst it keeps so close to a *Greek* Copy much differing from any Copy, either Printed or Manuscript that we now have. So that in some places, it looks like a Paraphrase, and varies as much, as the *Chaldee* Paraphrase upon the *Pentateuch* does from the *Hebrew* Text. The reason of this difference in the *Greek*, seems to proceed from hence, That it has been taken from a Copy fitted for Ecclesiastical use, some of the Alterations being such, as are proper for that purpose, and such as may be observ'd in our Epistles and Gospels in the Liturgy, by adding a  
Proper

Proper Name, or altering a Particle to denote the Person that speaks, or to compleat the Sense: For that it has been taken from such a Copy, appears from the *Ἀναγνώματα*, or Lessons markt in the Margin Rubrick-wise; and from the Word *τις*, sometimes put at the end of a Lesson, to denote the Conclusion of a Reading. That these are the Marks of such Copies has been observ'd by Father Simon (g), and he needed only <sup>(g) Hist. N. T. Cb. 33.</sup> have apply'd them to this Manuscript, to have shewn it to have been taken from a Copy of this Nature: But this would have spoyl'd his Notion of the *Latin* Translations having been the Ancient Vulgar. I am so far satisfy'd, of its having been taken from such a Copy, that I once thought it, to have been fitted for the Churches of the *Greek* Empire, when both *Greek* and *Latin* were spoke there, as they were from *Constantine*, till after *Justinian*; in like manner, as they yet have the Bible in two Tongues in such places, where the People are of two Languages: But I think I have reason to alter my Opinion.

What

What Father *Simon* further conjectures, concerning the *French MSS* of *St. Paul's Epistles* being the Second Part of the *Cambridge Copy*, is undoubtedly true of one of them ; For besides that in a Catalogue of the Books of the New Testament, at the end of one of these MSS (h), the Gospels are placed in the same order, wherein they stand in the *Cambridge Copy*, *St. John* immediately after *St. Matthew*, and the agreeableness in the Character betwixt the *Cambridge* and *Benedictine Copy*, according to the Specimen of it, we have in *Mabillon* (i). There is a Fragment of *St. John's* last Epistle, betwixt *St. Mark's* Gospel, and the Acts of the Apostles, which shows, the Catholic Epistles have been there, and that the Book was once intire, containing only the *Revelations*, that were not for some Ages, so universally receiv'd in the Church.

(h) *Morin.*  
l. 1. Exerc.  
2. c. 3.

(i) P. 347.

If I have brought the Age of this MS too low, or lessen'd its Authority too much, I shall be ready to alter my Opinion upon better Reasons, for I am not much concern'd for the Reputation of a Critic. I hope I shall always have a due  
Con-

Concern for Religion and the Church, and that my Opinion should be true, I think, is the Interest of both: For this Copy differing so much from all others, tho' less Authority we give it, it will be able to do the less hurt. I am sure they have set it too high, who fetch it from *Irenæus*, or *St. Hillary*, both which Fathers were Born before the *Goths* had Letters; for that the Characters are *Gothic*, I think I may be pretty positive. For this Reason I shall never desire to see it printed, tho' a worthy Person seems to have that Design, and a Scheme has been mark'd out to that purpose: But I hope that Learned Body, in whose Custody it is, will have more Regard to the Will of the Doctor, whose first Intention, it certainly was, that it should not (k) be published.

(1) V. Bez.  
Epist. ad  
Acad. Cam.

Its various Readings have been given us already in the *Polyglot Bibles*, tho' not over accurately, and sufficient care taken, that it shall not, *In uno exemplo periclitari*; And what would the Critics have more? Even Father *Simon* has procur'd a Copy from *England*, tho' I much suspect, it

(1). Hist.  
N. I. Ch.  
30.

is no other than those various Readings : The Father tells us, *Morinus* had it from *Jurius* the Library-keeper of *Cambridge*, by such a mistake (1) as another Critic has given us a *Magdeburgh* College at *Oxford*. But of this perhaps too much.

I will only offer one Criticism, in order to wipe off a Blot from the *English*, that has been unjustly cast upon the Nation, either by the Author or Interpreter. I have already said in another Chapter, that *Chalcocondylas* does report of the *English*, that upon a Visit made to a Friend, it is permitted the Stranger by way of Complement to Lie with his Neighbor's Wife : This the Learned Interpreter of *Chalcocondylas* does plainly say, and it stands so in the last Royal Edition of that Author ; but the Word in *Greek*, is *κίσσαντα*, † which one would suspect was rather meant of *Kissing* ; no doubt some Wandring *Greek* had been in *England*, and having observ'd our way of Kissing our Neighbor's Wives, which might as well be let alone, had reported it to *Chalcocondylas* in a Word of nearest affinity in the *Greek*, and thereby



thereby given occasion to this Mistake. This Account seems so probable, that (with Submission to the Critics) I durst almost venture from thence, to add one other Word to our Glossaries.

† *Kiss*, being a proper word for kissing, there can be no great doubt of the Correction I made, nor needs the word be thrown into a Glossary any otherwise, then as it seems to be there rendred from the English.

## C H A P. XVII.

*Of Oriental Learning, Jewish  
and Arabian.*

**I**T has been an old Question, and much debated amongst Learned Men, whether greater Profit or Inconvenience ariseth from reading the Jewish Books? On the one hand it is alledg'd, that the Hebrew Tongue, and Jewish Rites and Customs, can be no way so well learnt, as from themselves; and that as in order to understand the Greek and Roman Polity, it is necessary to read Greek and Latin Authors: So if we would be acquainted with the Jewish affairs, we cannot learn them better, than from their own Books. On the other side, they have been charg'd with gross Ignorance, even in their own affairs; and their Books said to be so stuff'd

stuff'd with Trifles, or, what is worse, with poysonous Opinions, that the profit in reading them will not countervail the danger. Accordingly they have met with a very different Fate; At one time they have been order'd to be read and studied, as by *Clement the 5th*, (m) in the Council of *Vienna*: And again, the *Talmudic* Books have been adjudg'd to be burnt, as 12000 Volumes were by public Order, (n) only out of one Library at *Cremona*; And had not the Famous *Reuchlin* advocated for them under the Emperor *Maximilian*, they had been in danger of an Universal Ruine.

(m) *Clementin.*  
l. 5. tit. 1.  
(n) *V. Sixt. Senens. l. 2.*  
p. 120.

In such variety there may be need of distinction; And therefore the Jewish Writers may be consider'd two ways, either as Witnesses, or Interpreters: In the first sense, they have been Faithful Depositories, and very useful in handing down the Sacred Volumes, and in preserving the Text intire: In the other sense, their Skill or Authority, as Interpreters, has not been thought very considerable.

The great Reason whereupon their Books have been valued, has been their seeming Antiquity: In the last Age, we have been told of Books as Old as *Abraham* and *Ezra*, that have had the fortune to be believ'd by Wisemen; (o) and could their Rise be traced up and deriv'd from such an Original, they would have reason to be valued: But this Vizor has been taken off, and their Novelty or Imposture has been detected: *Morinus* has brought down most of them several Centuries from their boasted Height. Their *Talmud* that has been commented upon by the Modern Rabbins, has been shown to be little older than the Age of *Justinian*, the first Authentic mention we have of the *Misna*, or Text of that Book (for the *Gemara*, or Comment must have been yet later) being in one of his Novels (p), and probably, the Contention among the *Jews* about receiving it, had given occasion to that Law. *Origen* and *St. Jerome* knew nothing of that Book; who notwithstanding were inquisitive Men, and knowing in the Hebrew, and having had opportunities of consulting their Hebrew Masters, and occasions of citing

(o) V. *Morinus*. l. 2.  
Exerc. 6.  
cap. 1. Exerc. 9. cap. 2, &c.

(p) *Novels*.  
146.

ting them, and having done it in things of less moment, could not have avoided mentioning this, had it been then in being, and so noted, as to be a standing Law Ecclesiastical and Civil among the Jews (q). Their two Books *Bahir* and *Zohar*, so venerable among them for their mighty Age, have been brought down yet lower; tho' whatever Age they be of, they can be of no use to any, being only a heap of Cabalistical Niceties (r), which tho' much valu'd by such Men, as admire every thing that is abstruse and hidden, are sufficiently known to be nothing better than Jargon and Cant. The truth of it is, few of their ancient Books have been thought much better, being either so mystical, as hardly to be understood; or so full of Gross Legend, as to force them to take shelter under Allegories to reconcile them to sense. There is little Light to be borrow'd from them, for almost 1000 Years after the last Destruction of their Temple; and tho' about that time, some of the Modern Rabbins began to introduce Learning, yet this was no part of their Rabbinitism, but a departing there-from; most of the Learning they had was borrow'd from the *Arabians*; and *Maimo-*

(q) *Martin. ibid. Exerc. 6.*

(r) *Buxtorf. Bibl. Fat.*

*nides*, *Qui primus inter suos desit nurgari*, by mixing Philosophy and Reason with his Comments, in order to make their Books speak sense, thereby gave such offence, that he was continually persecuted for it by his Brethren, (s) and hardly escaped being branded for a Heretick. They that have taken the same way, ought upon their Principles to fall under the like Censure; and it ought always to be remembred, that the modern Rabbins have done best, whose Authority by their Age is inconsiderable, and their Skill not so extraordinary, as to need be imitated by Christians, who now understand their Language as well, and their Critical and Philological Learning much better than they do themselves. Even *Maimonides* (t) confesseth of his times, that the Jews were not then skilful in their own Language.

(s) Buxtorf.  
Praef. in  
Mor. Ne-  
vock.

(t) Mor.  
Nevoch.  
Par. 1.  
cap. 67.

I am not ignorant with what design some Men have decry'd the Rabbins; whatever their design may have been, they may have spoke truth, and at the same time mistake their aim: We have the less reason to be jealous of them, since they are not the only Men that have

have gone this way : For to pass by *Luther*, who has treated the Rabbins very ruggedly (u). Let us hear what a great Professor, *Reuchlin's* Scholar and Successor says of them, one who had spent all his Life, and part of his Estate in these Studies ; (x) In his Preface to his Dictionary ( one of the first considerable ones of this kind ) he gives this account, " In them is no light, no knowledge of God, no Spirit, no true and solid Art, no Understanding even of the Hebrew Tongue— they have done nothing worth notice towards understanding the Sacred Text ; Their Dictionaries and Comments have brought more obscurity than Light or Truth— And then goes on to challenge them in matter of Fact, and to point out a better way than that which they have follow'd, and such as himself has pursu'd.

(u) In Gen. cap. 16, &c.

(x) *Joh. Forsterum.*

He may have gone too far in depressing the Rabbins, if he have been too warm in decrying them, doubtless others have gone too great a length the other way, who have studied the *Talmud* so long, as to draw Contagion from thence, and almost become Rabbins themselves : A Country-

Countryman of our own has exceeded in this, who tho' he has only commented upon one Book, has had such Faith in the *Talmud*, as to believe, "That  
 "many of its Traditions were divinely  
 "deliver'd to *Moses* in Mount *Sinai*,  
 "which it was not lawful for *Moses* to  
 "divulge in writing; but being trans-  
 "mitted down orally to his Posterity,  
 "they are related to us in the *Talmudic*

(1) V. Pref.  
 ad Cod. lo-  
 ma. Multa  
 Allegorica  
 & pia di-  
 cta, quæ  
 Antiqui  
 Rabbini a  
 Deo exagi-  
 rati ejusq;  
 numine ab-  
 repti pro-  
 rulerunt,  
 in scriptis  
 Talmudicis  
 continen-  
 tur. *Ibid.*

Books. (1) And least this should not be enough, he is of opinion, "There  
 "are many Allegorical and Pious Say-  
 "ings contain'd there, that were utter'd  
 "by the ancient Rabbins, when heated  
 "with the Divinity, and mov'd by  
 "God. Could any *Jew* have said more?  
 Or could it be imagin'd, a Christian  
 would have said so much? If these be  
 the Fruits of Rabbinical Enquiries, sure-  
 ly they were better let alone. That a  
 Man that is conversant in these sort of  
 Studies should undervalue all other sorts  
 of Learning, is no new thing; it is what  
 has been observ'd, and for which a rea-  
 son may be given: For these Enquiries  
 being out of the way, and not every  
 man's possession, vulgar Studies must be  
 despis'd by Men of uncommon Attain-  
 ments, and these only valu'd that are  
 difficult



## Reflections upon Learning.

difficult and uncommon. Or that others should imagine they find Eloquence in the Rabbins, and should compare *Abraham* to *Cicero*, and *Aben-Ezra* to *Salust* (2), is not very strange; for Men are apt to find Beauty in Blemishes, where they have plac'd their Affections: But that Men should proceed to Idolize them, no other Reason can be assign'd, but that which is given for all Idols, and that is, that they are all of them *vain*.

Because the Rabbins have been said to have borrow'd most of their humane Learning from the *Arabians*, I will likewise speak one word of them. As the *Jews* have borrow'd from the *Arabians*, so have the *Arabians* from the *Greeks*; For they were so far from having any Learning of their own, that the true *Arabs*, the Descendants of *Ismael*, had no Letters; and their Language must have been lost, had it not been preserv'd in their Poems, that were compos'd by their Ancient *Bards* (a), and by their facility being easily learnt, were deliver'd down from hand to hand. Other Learning they had very little, except Poetry, till having over-run the Eastern

(a) Pocock  
ad Spec.  
Arab.

Eastern Parts of the *Greek Empire*, they were taught it by the Vanquish'd People, who translated the *Greek Authors* for them into their own Language; and the *Arabians* being Men of quick Wits, refin'd so much upon their Authors, that *Aristotle* became more subtle in the *Arabic*, than he was before in his own Tongue; and so much was he admir'd in that Dress, that he was turn'd from thence into Latin, with *Averroes* upon him; and for some time, one was not thought to understand *Aristotle* aright, unless he had read him with *Averroes's Comment*. But this humor held no longer than *Averroes* came to be understood, (understood I should not have said, for perhaps no Man ever understood him, but till he came to be better lookt into,) for then his over-great Nicety was not only discover'd; but besides other Errors, he was charged with the Whimsies and Visions of the *Alcoran* (b): And *Averroes* is now as much out of fashion for his Philosophy, as *Avicenna* is for his Physic, tho' they were once the Wonder of their Age and Nation.

(a) Ind.  
Viv. de  
Caus. Cor-  
rupt. Ars.  
Lib. 5.

Physic and Philosophy were the Studies wherein the *Arabians* excell'd most,  
and

and therefore the Books of that kind were first translated and publish'd among us : But since those Books have ceased to be admir'd, an attempt has been made another way, and we have been furnish'd with a Sett of *Arabic* Historians, by *Erpenius*, *Golini*, and *Dr. Pocock*. Their Books may be seen, and containing Matter of Fact; every Man is able to judge of their performance : What sort of Historian *Abulpharajius* is, may be inferr'd from his Learned Editor, who was under discouragements in publishing him, from his disagreement with *Greek* and *Roman* History. I am sure *Eutychius* is no better, (whom *Mr. Selden* is pleas'd to style Our *Egyptian Bede*;) His History of the Council of *Nice* is such a Romance, as exceeds all Faith, but that of a *Rabbin* or *Arabian* (c). According (c) *Eutych.* to him above 2000 Bishops meet at P. 440, &c. *Nice*, after they had been above two years in assembling there; The Patriarch of *Alexandria* is appointed Prelident, and no more notice taken of *Honius*, than if he had not been present : *Constantine* is describ'd as transferring his Power upon the Bishops by the delivery of his Ring, Sword, and Scepter ;  
with

with other things equally absurd: And that the Canons might bear better proportion to the number of Bishops; In the *Arabic* Copies we have above a hundred, (d) whereas all the World knows there are only twenty genuine Canons of that Council.

(d) V. Abr.  
Pachel. Eu-  
rych. Vind.  
Par. 2. c.

17.

We have been told oftner than once of *Livy* compleat in *Arabic*, yet dormant among their Manuscripts: But if their Tranillations be no better than their Histories, (and if we will take *Haetius's* (e) account of them, they are rather worse,) we have no reason to desire it over-eagerly, tho' it could be produc'd, which I almost despair it ever shall. Nor have we reason to be more fond of their Geography, if we may make an Estimate from that taste thereof, which has been given us, by *Gabriel Sionita*, in the *Nubian Geographer*, who has relisht so little with the World, as not to raise any thirst or appetite of having more. With what exactness he has describ'd the three parts of the World, particularly *Europe* might be easily shewn, were it worth the while to trace him in his Failings: He is to be seen, and every one that has a  
Globe

(e) DeClar.  
Interpr. p.  
121.

Globe and Maps, can judge of his Work.

In one word, the great Use of the *Arabian* and *Rabbinical* Writers seems to be, in confuting the *Alcoran* and *Talmud*; and to that end, there is no doubt, they may be effectually useful.

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CHAP.

## C H A P. XVIII.

*Of Scholastic Learning.*

**D**Ivinity as it is profess'd in the Schools is become an Art, and so profound a piece of Learning, that it requires great Parts and much pains to master it; an argument sure, that it is not so very necessary, otherwise it would need less skill to be understood. I would not detract from, much less deny all use of this sort of Learning, tho if I should be free in my Censures, I should have good authority to warrant me therein; most of the first Reformers having led the way, and some of them having declaim'd against it pretty warmly. Its great abuse in the Church of *Rome* had given too just occasion to this; for that Church having adopted it into her Systems, and interwoven it with most of her opinions, and the School-  
Men

men having been the Great Champions of her Cause, the Reformers were never safe, till they had disarm'd her of this hold, which they did by exposing this new method, and introducing in its stead a much surer one, built upon the clear Text of Scripture, and deductions from thence, which they made use of in all their Conferences and Disputations. This tho' the true and ancient way, and most agreeable to the simplicity of the Gospel, yet had been much neglected by the Schoolmen, who having broached new Opinions, were to support them by new methods, and the Scriptures having been silent, or not speaking home to their purpose, they therefore us'd them very sparingly: The Authority of the Fathers was call'd in, and where these were deficient *Aristotle's* Philosophy was to supply the defect, (without whom if the observation in my Author (f) be true, a neighbouring Church had wanted some Articles of Faith) the Fathers and Philosophical reasons were their great strength. Tho' after all it must be confess'd, that where the opinions of their Church have not

(f) In che  
baveva  
gran parte  
*Aristotle*,  
coll' haver  
distinto  
Essenza-  
mente tut-  
ti i generi

di cause; a che se egli non fosse adoperato, noi mancavano di molti articoli di fede. *Hist. del Conc. Trident. l. 2.*

Q

con-

been concern'd, and where they have argu'd barely upon the Principles of Reason, they have often done exceeding well; only launching out beyond their line they have as frequently miscarry'd.

The Faults in this sort of Learning are chiefly these, (1.) Defectiveness for want of proper helps. (2) Incoherence. (3) Nicety. (4) Obscurity. (5). Barbarity. (1) The Languages are one proper help, for *Aristotle's* Philosophy, and many of the Fathers being writ in Greek, it was necessary in order to be Master of these, that the Language wherein they were writ should be understood: This help the Schoolmen wanted, having had no Greek, and only a very moderate share of Latin; *Aristotle* was known to them in a Tongue that was none of his own, and being obscure enough in himself, was much more so, in wretched Translations; and the Fathers who were very Intelligible in Greek, were either obscur'd, by being turn'd into another Idiom, or were made to speak somewhat they never meant. Both Greek and Latin Fathers have been treated equally ill, for want of another proper help, viz. *Criticism*,  
in



in distinguishing Genuin from Spurious Authors; for want of which, Authorities have been crudely swallow'd down without distinction; false Authorities have been obtruded, and true ones rejected, or often mutilated; the Ages of Authors have been confounded, and some late Impostor has assum'd the name of a venerable Father. Instances whereof (for I do not love to dwell upon fores) may be had in *Launoy* in several of his Epistles, and in *Danaus's* Censure upon the first Book of Sentences.

(2). By incoherence I do not mean any inconsequence in the way of arguing in the Divinity of the Scholes, But a disagreement of the parts, that it principally consists of; which being chiefly two (as we have before observed) the Sentences of the Fathers and *Aristotle's* Philosophy, what tolerable agreement can there be, betwixt two things so very different? Most of the Fathers were *Platonists* in their opinion, possibly for the sake of some agreement, which that Philosophy seem'd to have with the Christian Religion: *Justin Martyr*, *Origen*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and to name no more, *St. Augustin* who

was more follow'd in the Schools, than all the rest, was of that number : *Aristotle* was either much neglected by the Fathers, or where they had occasion to speak of him, they usually condemn him; and that either for his Sophistic way of reasoning, or for his unsuitable Notions of God and Providence, which are of first consideration in the Schools. Even in the Church of *Rome* *Aristotle* was often forbid, sometimes ordered to be burnt, and what is most strange, at that time when his Books were commented upon by *Aquinas*, they stood prohibited by a Decree of *Gregory* the IX. (g) Of late almost in our time, a proposal was made at *Rome* to *Gregory* the XIV. that *Aristotle's* Philosophy might be banished the Schools, and *Plato* substituted in his place, as being more agreeable to the Christian Religion, and Sense of the Fathers; and above forty Propositions were then produc'd, wherein *Plato's* Consonancy was shown, in all which *Aristotle* was pretended (h) to be Dissonant from the true Religion: Whether upon just grounds or no, I will not venture to determine; for since Platonism has obtain'd, as it once did pretty early, and has

7  
*Plat. au-  
 noy de var-  
 Aristot.  
 Fortuné  
 cap. 7. Co.*

(E) *ibid.*  
 cap. 14.

has again done of late, it has been found lyable to as dangerous consequences, as any that have been yet charg'd upon the other Philosophy. I only bring thus much to show, that there can be no good agreement in this particular, where the Parts are of so different a nature, as the Fathers and *Aristotle*, and so jarring, that they cannot naturally cohere.

(3). Nicety is the great fault of the Schools, her Doctors have been styl'd *Profound, Subtle, Irrisragable*; Titles which they have most valu'd themselves upon, and seem not much to have affected the reputation of being Familiar and Easie, at least none of their Titles have been derived from thence. They delight in refining upon one another, and sometimes spin so fine a thread, that it is either broke or much weakened in drawing it out: They have perplex'd Knowledge, by starting insuperable difficulties, and seem in this to have run into the same fault with your too profound Politicians, who, as they have often foreseen designs, which are neither practicable, nor ever intended; so these men have propos'd Objections, that would never have been thought of, had not they

first started them; the consequence whereof has been, that we have furnished our Enemies with Objections, who have made use of our Weapons, and have turn'd our own Artillery against us. This is too visible in our Modern *Socinians*, who have often gather'd out of this Storehouse, and by picking up difficulties in the Schoolmen, have turn'd their Objections into Proof and Arguments, and have thereby gain'd the Reputation of subtle Men. Thus Controversies have been multiplied, and those we have already, have swoln to an unmeasurable height, and every difference has become irreconcilable; whilst Men study Nicety more than Peace, and stretch their Wits, and rack their Inventions, to out reach their Opponents. And it were well if the mischief had stop'd here, and Men's Curiosity had not led them on, from nice Questions to such as are Impious: It has done this, and least I should be thought to do them wrong, I shall refer the Reader to an unexceptionable Author (1) one of the Greatest Champions, the Church of *Rome* ever had, for a Catalogue of them; which are so offensive to Christian Ears, that I forbear

(b) Card.  
Perran. de  
P Euchar.  
l. 3. ch.  
10.

forbear to put them down in English, though he has not scrupled to give them in a more common Language.

(4). *Obscurity*, where things are intricate in themselves, if they be not so clearly explain'd in treating of them, as might be desir'd, the nature of the things will excuse, as not being capable of perspicuity; or if hard Terms are made use of, if very significative, and not too many, this is what is allowable in all Arts: But then, if Terms of Art have been multiply'd beyond necessity, and without significancy; or if things that are plain in themselves have been obscure'd, by being handled too Artificially, this sure is a great Abuse; and this is, what has been charg'd upon many of the Schoolmen. The mysteries of Religion are not capable of being rendred obvious to Reason, and therefore if they have not made these plain, they are not to be blam'd; they would have been more excusable, had they explain'd them less, and had not trusted too much to rational helps, in explaining things, that are not the Objects of our Understanding; but tho Mysteries are not to be explain'd, other things

in Religion are clear enough, and would continue so, were they not clouded and involv'd by too much Art. I do not charge this as a general fault, tho it be too common; some of the Schoolmen are less obnoxious to this charge, and generally the First, are least Obscure; and *Lombard* and *Aquinas*, the two Authors of the *Sentences* and *Sums* have been more plain, than many of those that have writ upon them, whose Comments have often helpt to obscure the Text. It is an odd Commendation that is given by *Cardan* (k) to one of our Countrymen, one of the most subtle among the Doctors, that only one of his Arguments was enough to puzzel all Posterity, and that when he grew old he wept, because he could not understand his own Books. Men that write *De Subtilitate*, must be allow'd to say what they please, but those of ordinary Capacities would have thought it a greater Character, that our Doctor had well explain'd that one Argument, and had writ so, that he might have been understood. There are great Charms in being esteemed subtle, and it is an argument hereof, that *Cardan* commends this Author for his subtility, whom in  
all

(k) *De*  
*Subsil. l.*  
16.

all probability, he had never seen, otherwise he could not so foully have mistaken his name, as he does (1) and as some others have done, that have spoke of this Author, who is very rare. He is indeed profoundly obscure, tho I must confess, I have only lookt into him so far, as to observe his way of writing, which is really such, as if he never meant to be understood. Others have been faulty enough in this way, and it were no hard task to show it in many of the rest, but having mention'd this Man, I can say nothing worse against obscurity.

(1) Richard.  
al. Ray-  
mund Sui-  
seth, vener.  
1520. ap.  
Cardan.  
Johan Su-  
iffet.

(5). Rough language and Barbarousness of expression, that were made so great Objections, upon the reviving of Learning, and are yet so with Polite Men, whose ears can bear nothing without ornament and smoothness, shall be no great faults with me, and in abstruse Subjects may be born with; and I should digest Caramuel's new Scholastic Dialect, provided it conduced to promote knowledge: However, a bad Dress and ill Meen are Blemishes upon knowledge, tho they detract nothing from its strength, and ought to be some mortification

(m) Bapt.  
Gonet.  
Clyp.  
Theolog.  
Par. 1669.

tification to those Men who are apt to over value themselves upon imaginary Perfection. Of all Men they are farthest from it, and after so many Imperfections as have been charg'd upon them, it was surprizing to me, to meet with one of the last Commentators upon the *Sum* (m) writing as if he had liv'd before *Luther*. In a Prefatory Discourse entitl'd, *Commendatio Doctrinae D. Thomae*, he endeavours to prove in so many several Chapters, that *St. Thomas* had writ his Books, not without special infusion of God Almighty Cap. 1. That in writing them, he receiv'd many things by Revelation Chap. 2. That all he writ was without any Error, Cap. 4. That Christ had given Testimony to his Writings, Cap. 6. And to show of how near the same Authority, *St. Thomas's Sum* is to the Holy Scriptures, he assures us, That as in the first General Councils, it was usual to have the Holy Bible laid open upon the Altar, as the Rule of their proceedings; so in the last General Council (which with them is the Council of *Trent*), *St. Thomas's Sum* was plac'd with the Bible upon the same Altar, as another Inferior Rule of Christian Doctrine Chap. 8. which is very agree-



agreeable to what has been writ by a Jesuit (n) upon the same Subject, That all the General Councils, that have been held since St. *Thomas* liv'd, have taken the opinions they defin'd from his Doctrin. It were needless after this to cite the Elogy of another Jesuit, (o) where St. *Thomas* is styl'd an Angel, and that as he learnt many things from the Angels, so he taught Angels somethings; That St. *Thomas* had said what St. *Paul* was not suffer'd to utter; That he speaks of God as if he had seen him, and of Christ, as if he had been his voice, and more to this effect.

(n) *Tawner.*  
Quest. 1.  
Dub. 1.

(o) *Petr.*  
*Labbe ap.*  
*Gonet.*  
*ibid.*

When such bold expressions are openly vented, it is time to look about us, and it concerns every Man to endeavour to give a check to such daring assertions. I am far from detracting either from the knowledge or Holiness of St. *Thomas*, which doubtless were both extraordinary, But when a Mortal Man, is equal'd to the Angels in Heaven, and such Elogies given him, as if he were capable of hearing, he must blush to receive; it is justice to him, to rescue him from false and undue Praises. To do him Right, he has improv'd natural Reason

Reason to an uncommon height, and many of those proofs of a God and Providence and Natural Religion, that have been advanced of late, as new Arguments with so much applause, have been borrowed from him or other School-men ; and are only not his, by being put in a new Dress, and sometimes in a worse method. Had it been his fortune to have lived in a happier Age, under better opportunities , and with those helps that we now enjoy, he must have made a greater *Genius*, than many of those, who are now lookt upon with wonder.

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**C H A P. XIX.***Conclusion.*

**A**N D now having gone through the several sorts of Learning, and observ'd the various defects, and oft-times uncertainties, which they are subject to; The Conclusion is obvious, that since no compleat satisfaction is to be met with from them, we are to seek for it somewhere else, if happily it may be found. It may be found, but not in our own powers, or by our own strength; and that which our most exalted Reason, under all its improvements, cannot yield us, is only to be had from Revelation. It is there we may securely rest, after the Mind has try'd all other ways and methods of Knowledge, and has tir'd it self with fruitless Enquiries. It is with the Mind, as with the Will and Appetites; for as  
after

after we have try'd a thousand Pleasures, and turn'd from one Enjoyment to another, we find no Rest to our Desires, till we at last fix them upon the Sovereign Good : So in pursuit of Knowledge, we meet with no tolerable satisfaction to our Minds, till after we are wearied with tracing other Methods, we turn them at last upon the One supreme and unerring Truth. And were there no other use of humane Learning, there is at least this in it, That by its many defects, it brings the Mind to a sense of its own weakness, and makes it more readily, and with greater willingness, submit to Revelation. God may have so order'd in his wise Providence, thereby to keep us in a constant dependance upon himself, and under a necessity of consulting him in his Word ; which since Profane Men treat so neglectfully already, they would have it in greater Contempt ; and it would be much more vile in their Eyes, did they find any thing within them equally perfect, which might guide them in their Course, and bring them to the Haven, where they would be. But this since they do not meet with, it ought to wean them from an opinion of themselves,

selves, and incline them to seek out satisfaction somewhere else, and to take shelter where it may be found.

I have said nothing in this whole Discourse (nor can I repeat it too often) with design to discredit humane Learning; I am neither of their mind (p) who were for burning all Books, except their Bibles; nor of that Learned Man's opinion, who thought the Principles of all Arts and Sciences might be borrow'd from that Store-house: I would willingly put a just Value upon the one, without depressing the other; But where Men lash out the other way, and take the liberty to exalt Learning to the prejudice of Religion, and to oppose shallow Reason to Revelation, it is then time, and every Man's business, to endeavour to keep it under, at least to prevent its aspiring, by not suffering it to pass its due Bounds. Our Reason is a proper Guide in our Enquiries, and is to be follow'd, where it keeps within its Sphere; but shining dimly, it must borrow Rays from the Fountain of Light, and must always act subordnately to Revelation. Whenever it crosseth that, it is out of its Sphere, and indeed

(p) Anabaptists in Germany.

deed contradicts its own Light ; for nothing is more reasonable, than to believe a Revelation, as being grounded upon God's Veracity, without which even Reason it self will be often doubting. That whatever God (who is Truth it self) reveals, is true ; is as sure and evident a Proposition, as any we can think of ; It is certain in its Ground, and evident in its Connexion, and needs no long Consequences to make it out ; whereas most of our rational deductions are often both weakly bottom'd, and depending upon a long train of Consequences, which are to be spun from one another, their strength is often lost, and the thread broken, before we come at the Conclusion.

And tho' it be commonly objected, that there are as many differences concerning Divine Truths, as about those of Nature ; yet I think there needs nothing further be said to this, but that Men would approach Divine Truths with the same dispositions, that are requir'd by Philosophers to the reading of their Writings, and the Objection would soon fall to the ground : The best Philosophers require, that in reading  
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ing their Books, we should lay aside partiality to a Party, all passion and other prejudice; and let Men only approach the Scriptures with the same preparations of Mind, and with these and ordinary Grace (that is never wanting to those that seek it) I dare be confident, they will have no reason to complain of Obscurity or Ambiguity in those Sacred Writings: With these Helps (that are had by asking) the weakest and most ordinary Capacity shall see enough, and shall not stand in need of deep Reach or Penetration, which are necessary to the understanding of Natural Truths. God, who would have all Men happy, has likewise made them all so far wile, and has so order'd, that the most important Truths, should be the most easy and common; and if it can be no objection, that to the understanding of them, we must make use of ordinary means, and must come prepar'd with suitable dispositions. This is what is necessary in all other things; for every thing is best understood by the same Spirit by which it is writ.

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God has gone yet farther with us; Necessary Truths are not only the most common, but he has likewise made them the most convincing, and has given them a power, that is not easily resisted: Rational Arguments, however, convincing they may seem, are usually repell'd by Reason, and it is hard to convince a Man by such methods, that is equally Master of Reason with our selves; whereas Divine Truths make their own way, they act upon us with a secret Power, and press the Mind with an almost irresistible Strength, and do not only perswade, but almost force an assent: The first only act like Light, the other strike down and pierce us through like Lightning. We have as remarkable a passage to this purpose (g), as most in Ecclesiastical Story; which tho' well attested, yet were it only a Parable, the Moral of it might be of good use. Upon the Convening of the first General Council at *Nice*, and the appearing of the Christian Bishops there, several of the Heathen Philosophers offer'd themselves among the Sons of God, intending to signalize themselves upon  
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(g) *Sozom.*  
*Hist.* l. 1.  
c. 18. *Ruf-*  
*in. Hist.*  
l. 1. c. 3.



so great an occasion, by attacking the Faith in its most Eminent Professors, and by endeavouring to overthrow it by Philosophy and Reason. To this End several Conferences were held upon the Principles of Reason, by the most noted Men of either Party, in which one of the Philosophers more forward than the Rest, begun to grow Insolent upon a suppos'd advantage, and must needs triumph before Victory : An aged Bishop took fire at this, one who had been a Confessor in the late Persecution, and was more noted for his Faith than Learning ; Philosophy he had none, but encounters his Adversary in a new manner, in the name of *Jesus*, and by the word of God, and with a few plain weapons drawn from thence, he humbles the Pride of this arrogant Philosopher, and strait way leads him Captive to the Font : All the Reply our Philosopher had left him, was, that while he was encountred by Philosophy and humane Learning, he defended himself the same way, but being attack'd by higher Reasons, it was necessary for him to yeild himself up to the power of God. Such is the Force of that Word, which simple vain Men so much contemn !

What then must we do ? Are we to give our selves up to this Word, and lay a side all humane Learning ? I am far from thinking so, and have already cautioned against any such wild and Anabaptistical Conceit ; these two may well consist, Learning is of good use in explaining this Word, and the Word serves very well to lessen our opinion of humane Learning ; the former may be serviceable, whilst it acts ministerially and in subservience to the latter, but being only a Hand-maid to Religion, whenever it usurps upon that, it is to be kept down and taught its Duty ; it is still only humane Learning, that is, very weak and very defective, and after all the great things that can be said of it, and the uses that may be assign'd it, it must after all be confess'd, that our *Bible* is our Best Book, and the only Book that can afford any true and solid satisfaction. It is that which satisfies and never satiates, which the deeper it is lookt into, pleaseth the more, as containing new and hid Treasures, by the opening whereof, there always springs up in the mind fresh pleasure and new desire

desire. Whereas humane Writings (like all humane things) cloy by their continuance, and we can scarce read them the second time without irksomeness, and oftentimes not without nauseating those fine things, that please so wonderfully at the first reading.

The Sum of all is this, we busie our selves in the search of Knowledge, we tire out our Thoughts, and wast our Spirits in this pursuit, and afterwards flatter our selves with mighty acquirements, and fill the World with Volumes of our Discoveries : Whereas would we take as much pains in discovering our weakness and defects, as we spend time in Ostentation of our knowledge, we might with half the time and pains, see enough to show us our Ignorance, and might thereby learn truer wisdom. We frame to our selves New Theories of the world, and pretend to measure the Heavens by our Mathematical Skill (that is, Indefinite Space by a Compass, or Span) whilst we know little of the Earth we tread on, and every thing puzzles us, that we meet with there : We live upon the Earth, and most Men think they  
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rest upon it, and yet it is a very difficult Question in Philosophy, whether the Earth rests or moves; and is it not very wonderful, that we should be such strangers to the place of our Abode, as to know nothing, whether we rest there, or travel a dayly Circuit of some thousand Miles? We rack our Inventions to find out Natural Reasons for a Deluge of Waters, by fetching down Comets from above, and racking the *Cortex* of the Earth, to furnish out sufficient story for that purpose; and yet from the *Convexity* of the Waters, it is hard to account in the Course of Nature, why there should not be a Deluge every day: And perhaps Providence is the surest Bar, that has set Bounds to the Waters, which they shall not pass. We are not only puzzled by things without us, but we are strangers to our own Make and Frame, for tho we are convinc'd that we consist of Soul and Body; yet no Man hitherto has sufficiently described the Union of these two, or has been able to explain, how Thought should move Matter? Or how Matter should act upon Thought? Nay the most Minute things in Nature, if duly considered,  
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carry with them the greatest wonder, and perplex us as much, as things of greater bulk and show. And yet we, who know so little in the smallest matters, talk of nothing less than *New Theories of the World* and *vast Fields of Knowledge*, busying our selves in Natural Enquiries, and flattering our selves with the wonderful Discoveries and mighty Improvements that have been made in Humane Learning, a great part of which are purely imaginary, and at the same time neglecting the only true and solid and satisfactory Knowledge: Things that are obscure and intricate we pursue with eagerness, whilst Divine Truths are usually disregarded, only because they are easie and common: Or if their be some of a higher nature, they shall possibly be rejected, because they are above, or seemingly contrary to Reason, whilst we admit several other things without scruple, which are not reconcilable with Revelation; tho Reveal'd Truths be certainly Divine, and the other, either no Truths at all, or at the best, only Humane. This sort of Conduct is very preposterous, for after all, true Wisdom and satisfactory Knowledge,

ledge, is only to be had from Revelation, and as to other Truths, which are to be collected from Sense and Reason, our Ignorance of them will always be so much greater than our Knowledge, as there are a thousand things we are ignorant of, to one thing that we thoroughly know.

F I N I S.

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